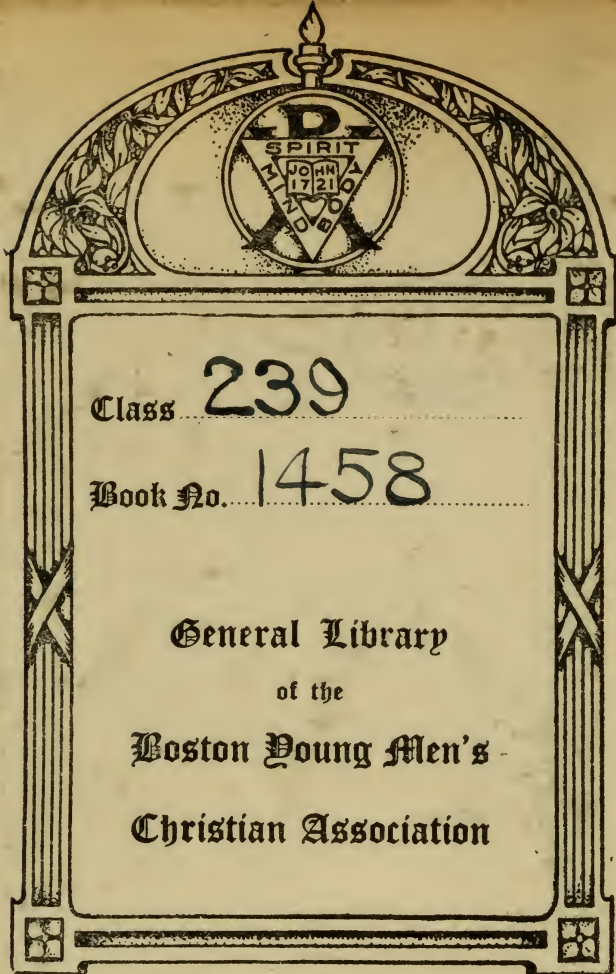




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ENEMIES AND EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY

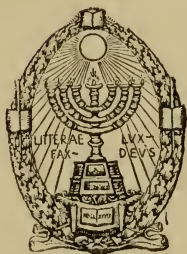
THOUGHTS ON QUESTIONS OF
THE HOUR

BY

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

AUTHOR OF "A HISTORY OF ORIENTAL AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE."



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TO MY MOTHER,
NOW WITH CHRIST,
WHOSE LOVING COMMENDATION WAS TO ME A HOLY STIMULUS
IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS,
THIS VOLUME
IS
AFFECTIONATELY AND REVERENTLY
DEDICATED.

PREFACE

WHEN Colonel John Hay was appointed minister to England and his family went with him to live in London, Mrs. Hay, who had become deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of the people who lived about her summer residence in Newbury-on-Lake-Sunapee, New Hampshire, requested me to hold services during her absence, as opportunity offered, at the Lakeside Union Meeting House in that town. For two summers I assumed charge there, and made an address each Sabbath. The twelve chapters that comprise this volume are based on the Addresses of 1898.

The course of Addresses given at Newbury was the outcome of a visit during the previous summer at Greenacre, on the Piscataqua River, in the town of Eliot, Maine. The efforts there making represent a disorganized search, or rather groping, after truth, on the part of persons who either know nothing of the intrinsic nature of Christianity, or have deliberately turned their backs upon the religion of their fathers in the hope of finding something more satisfying in the crude conclusions of science falsely so called, or the husks of Hinduism and

Theosophy. Native Brahmans, Buddhists, and Parsis were on the ground, pressing the claims of their false faiths upon a host of listeners, who were insufficiently equipped to judge of their merits, and quite willing to be deceived by the St. Audrey wares. The righteous indignation kindled in my soul by this spectacle is perhaps venial. While standing in the Eirenaion, or Hall of Peace, I resolved, if my life were spared, to answer the arguments there advanced against the religion of Jesus Christ, in a series of Addresses which would demonstrate, as far as the power might be vouchsafed to me, the preeminent claims of Christianity. Circumstances led me to select the Lakeside Chapel at Newbury as an appropriate place for the discussion of this subject, and with the approval of Mrs. Hay I wrote the original Addresses at Sunapee, and presented them last season to the resident and visiting population of the lake region. It is with the desire of assuring souls that are swaying between doubt and belief, as well as of strengthening those who are already in the faith, that these Addresses are given in their present form to the public.

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOS.

New York, July, 1899.

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INTRODUCTION

THE Addresses to which this note is introductory are needed and able. They proceed from the Christian standpoint, and are distinctly evangelical.

They are timely. A boasted and dangerous open-mindedness which accords prompt and too ready hearing to every "ism," no matter how absurd or idle, prevails among us to an alarming extent. Let Madame Blavatsky, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, or the Fox sisters, claim the public ear, and they straightway have it with equal, nay with greater, readiness than it is accorded to Moses, David, or Isaiah, to Matthew, Mark, or Luke, or John.

It is amazing the interest and eagerness with which men and women who pass among us as intelligent proceed to examine and accept the vaporings, rhapsodies, and involved speculations of these false teachers; while a Gospel which has satisfied for ages the intellects and received

the homage of such men as Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Francis Bacon, and Daniel Webster, is hardly allowed a patient if, indeed, any hearing.

If there ever was a time when the apostolic warning of Ephesians iv. 14 was in order, it would seem to be the day in which we live—

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

These Addresses are needed. Flashing the light of Divine truth as they do upon many an obscure theory or dark and veiled and skulking scheme, they will be helpful to the Christian believer, who, while his own faith may be firm enough, is at times tempted to tremble for the ark of God.

They will be welcomed, too, by busy pastors so occupied with cares and preparations that they find little time or strength for minute investigation of the multiplying *isms* of an ism-loving day; putting them into possession as it does, in a succinct, and simple way, of the main danger-points and delusions of

treacherous schemes, which he too often finds insidiously seeking to undermine the faith of one and another of the members of the flock of which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer.

Nor will the book be without its interest and value for another class, who while not yet accepting the Christian faith, claim to be seekers of the Light; and who, whatever their learning, are candid enough to ask what can be said on the side of God's truth, and honest enough fairly to consider it.

In respect of these advantages, we know no other book which quite fills the place of the present volume.

That these Addresses are able, the name of their author, the distinguished position he has won as a student and instructor, and the work he has already effected in the literary world, are sufficient guarantees.

WILLIAM T. SABINE,
Pastor of the First Reformed
Episcopal Church of New York.

New York, July, 1899.

ENEMIES AND EVIDENCES
OF CHRISTIANITY

The Preeminent Claims of Christianity.

(What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? Song of Solomon, v. 9.)

IN "The Crown of Wild Olive," it seems to me that John Ruskin has described with singular discrimination the age upon which we have fallen. After speaking of exaltation into bright human life, he continues as follows:

"Then comes the period when conscience and intellect are so highly developed that new forms of error begin in the inability to fulfill the demands of the one or to answer the doubts of the other. Then the wholeness of the people is lost. All kinds of hypocrisies and oppositions of science develop themselves. Their faith is questioned on one side and compromised with on the other. Wealth commonly increases at the same period to a destructive extent; luxury follows, and the ruin of the nation is certain."

What a faithful picture of the day in which we live—a day whose grasp on truth is nerveless; a day of false liberalism; of misconception, ignorance, and self-assurance; of impatience of old restraints and established

boundaries ; of sneer at principle ; of gold-lust and leisure-love ; of profound indifference, the most fruitful factor in the production of evil. Since the world curtsied at the lift of Roman scepters, Christianity has not been so relentlessly assailed by open and insidious foes.

Antiquated Oriental systems are presented as its rivals by skeptics and haters of the faith who have purloined the noblest conceptions and even the very phraseology of the gospels to gild the base metal of Eastern philosophy. Infidelity is maintaining agencies in heathen lands for the collection of ammunition to be used against the truth. . Parliaments of religions give color to the heresy that salvation is not through Christ alone ; and native advocates of foreign faiths, while craftily concealing the organic defects of their own beliefs, palm off on a credulous American public the monstrous falsehood that all religions teach in common these two great truths, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Learned Brahmans and Buddhists are paraded on our platforms, where they bewitch the unwary with *réchauffés* of the arguments of English infidels in favor of their false gods, declaring that Christ and Buddha are one and that there is no hope beyond the final

reincarnation. Their bibles and catechisms, agleam with Christian beauty, are circulated in attractive print and binding, and the heathen systems of the East are masquerading in the costumes of Western heterodoxies with new and high-sounding titles. Every section of our country has advocates of Oriental occultism and pantheism in the adherents of Christian Science, Spiritism, and Theosophy. Our magazines and reviews print eulogiums of new standards of faith and morals. Cheap antichristian arguments help to insure a sale for the Sunday editions of our dailies, and not only corrupt millions of home readers but are eagerly devoured, in a swarm of reprints, by the ranchmen and miners of the frontier.

Materialists are asserting that the brain secretes thought as the sweat glands secrete perspiration—that thought is material; and Monists are pronouncing religion a product of abstraction and reflection, and finding the origin of all religions in the common wants of mankind. Christ they place on a plane with Buddha, Confucius, and Plato; but by tactfully admitting him to be the greatest of human teachers they have secured a hold on a Christian-bred class who are agnostically

inclined, and like the reed of Scripture are shaken by every wind of doctrine.

But most dangerous is the teaching of that broad universalism which, assuming that the divine underlies all creeds, would make other religions as pure and sacred as our own, and include all faiths and isms in what Professor Ellinwood has styled "one sweet emulsion of meaningless negations, which patronizes Christ and applies the name of Christianity to doctrines the very opposite of its teachings."

It has become fashionable among the ultra-cultured to regard Christianity as "a respectable mythology," like the author of "Robert Elsmere;" to deny the existence of a personal Deity, and define God as identical with matter and energy; to scout the responsibility of man to a Being outside and above him, and to limit his responsibility to his own self, and to humanity from which it is declared he has received the best it had to give and to which he must return what he himself has produced.

Thinkers of the Guyau type, ignoring the fact that Jesus commanded us to love God with our intellects and that Christian civilization is associated with the highest state of

mental efficiency, assert that the essence of the influence of Christianity is the development of the heart at the expense of the brain ; and after assuming the false premise, they denounce such a development as a sort of disturbance of equilibrium producing a natural monstrosity, and predict a future without any religion.

Men like Goldwin Smith are proclaiming that we but tamper with our understandings and consciences when we claim that the Old Testament contains both a divine and a human element. "Far better," he says, "to admit that the sacred books of the Hebrews are the works of man and not of God."

Others, of somewhat opposite view, hold that the Bible is inspired ; but, they add, so is the Bhagavad Gîtâ of the Hindus, and the Tripitaka of the Buddhists, and the Analects of Confucius, and the Koran, and Shakespeare's plays, and Milton's "Paradise Lost." All are inspired ; but all are a mixture of truth and error, and so require continuous editing and correction to bring them up to date and make them harmonize with the times. And when the work is accomplished, we are then, Dr. Hastings has naïvely remarked, "to believe and obey just as much

and just as little of any or all of them as we please."

"Advanced" clergymen, falling into line with other sensationists, are denouncing what they style "the traditional systems of divinity," and unblushingly clamor for a "new and real religion of some sort," "a gospel in the vernacular of the twentieth century which shall repudiate the hackneyed doctrine of atonement"—vicars of Christ calling for a new religion in place of our Jehovah-conceived Christianity, old yet forever new—the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow—bearing awful semblance to the Deity who designed it for man, unchangeableness in the midst of change!

Intellectual culture divorced from religious training is leading thousands to view Christianity with distrust. Forgetful that they owe directly to the Christian religion everything that makes life endurable, every uplift of the present century, such persons are always ready to listen to attacks on our national faith and to applaud the scurrilous blasphemy of infidel lecturers. Thus they are gradually laughed out of what little belief in Christianity may still cling to their shriveled souls.

Masses of half-educated people are psychologized by the glaring transparencies of science falsely so called, and enthusiastically espouse the cause of every innovation. Many do not know enough to believe the Bible. Others know so much that they are blinded by their knowledge, and hence really know nothing. Meditation has become a lost art. People hate to be made to think, and the alternative is skepticism or credulity. Every charlatan has a legion of followers. European enemies of religion are attempting to force upon us their non-religion; and with it their Sabbath desecration, its natural mother, and their anarchism, its legitimate child. Old world indifferentism is spreading among our people like a contagious disease. Prayer is denounced as hallucination or madness. So-called free thought renders the church superfluous; as in the city of Paris, where one hundred and sixty-nine places of worship suffice for nearly three millions of people.

This is one side of the canvas. The other reveals a spectacle of studied appeal to the animal passions of men and women, lighting unquenchable fires in the hearts of the young and susceptible. Everywhere the sensual is

emphasized; in the theaters, clubs, restaurants—even in the amusements, dress, and daily surroundings of professing Christians. Christ is dishonored on either hand. The very saloon has its psychology and art is prostituted to inflame desire for drink. The pageant sickens the soul: novels promulgating low views of the marriage relation, which has degenerated from a spiritual union to a physical partnership—fashionable women declaring it the height of immorality to become mothers—communists teaching concubinage to be less reprehensible than marriage—communists forbidding to marry—other communists teaching and practicing the community of wives in common with material property—fanatics preaching a female Christ and a female principle in the Godhead—women at the acme of spiritistic blasphemy affecting to contract marriage with demons! Recent words of Gladstone recur to me: “The citadel of Christianity is in these days besieged all round its circuit,” and he whose soul does not flame with indignation at these efforts to corrupt and ruin his fellows is ignorant of the full meaning of love to man.

It is my purpose in this series of addresses to contrast Christianity with those ancient

beliefs that false teachers are proclaiming its equals ; to demonstrate its preeminent claims to acceptance by man, and to show that it can have no affiliation with the modern "isms" that seek to destroy it by compromise and accommodation. A host of religious faiths is challenging our investigation and forcing us into comparisons with our own. We need have no fear of such examination if we are prepared to note fundamental differences as well as accidental similitudes. Such study broadens our knowledge of Christianity itself. He who knows Shakespeare alone does not know Shakespeare, because he does not know him in his relation to contemporary dramatists. So he who knows Christianity alone does not know it, because he does not know its points of superiority ; because he does not know that all the vaunted truth and beauty of oriental and classical pessimism is found in the "Memoirs of Christ," our four gospels, in completer form, in absolute perfection.

Moreover, Christianity courts rational investigation, demands that we should deal with questions of faith with our understandings, deprecates presuming on ignorance in matters theological, abhors superstition.

Christianity is the Religion of Reason ; it is founded on rational premises. It is not an instinct. It impels men to act in opposition to their instincts and propensities. If it be superior to the Oriental religions it must be capable of adducing incontestable proof of its preeminence. The ultimate faith of the world will be the faith "that satisfies the reason of man with its explanation of the fundamental principles of the universe on the one hand, and on the other of the nature and destiny of the human race."

Max Müller once said that the ancient religions of the world were but the milk of Nature, which was in due time to be succeeded by the Bread of Life. What is this Bread of Life more than the milk of Nature ? I feel that it is incumbent upon us to approach the subject with reverence for what is pure and bright and true in other systems ; in all kindliness and sincerity ; in thankfulness to God for the seers of the past, the men with great ideals who looked for better things without fruition, who did the best they could with the light they had, and perhaps in the providence of God have figured as path-pavers for the religion of Christ. We shall lose nothing by admitting the heathen

cults to have had a part to play in God's educational system. But this is not an admission that Christianity is a mere evolution from the religions that preceded it. These religions, as we know them, represent so many wrecks, so many falls from purity and truth ; for all in their germs were monotheistic, all are based on faith in immortality. Manetho indicates that the earliest creed of Egypt was a belief in one God. Tablets found amid the ruins of Nineveh contain prayers to an Omnipotent One. "When we ascend," says Max Müller, "to the most distant heights of Greek history, the idea of God as a Supreme Being stands before us as a simple fact." The Vedic faith of India, the ancient belief of China, the Shinto of Japan, testify to the existence of a God above all gods. And Naville truly remarks that "Almost all pagans seem to have had a glimpse of the Divine Unity over the multiplicity of their idols." The farther back we go, the purer the faith we encounter. Thus the Bible narrative is strangely confirmed. The very moral precepts of the Sacred Books of the East "condemn the nations who hold the truth in unrighteousness, and enforce the great doctrine that by their own consciences

all mankind are convicted of sin." Were there such a thing as moral and spiritual evolution, we should long ago have been a race of gods, beyond the reach of temptation, no longer in need of grace.

You will discover phenomenal moral excellence in some of the systems of religion we are to study; but you are to remember that the Gospel is more than a perfect system of ethics. The difference between religion and morality is thus summed up by Ruskin: "Religion signifies the feelings of love, reverence, or dread with which the human mind is affected by its conceptions of spiritual being, and you know well how necessary it is both to the rightness of our own life and to the understanding of the lives of others that we should always keep clearly distinguished our ideas of religion as thus defined and of morality as the law of rightness in human conduct. For there are many religions, but there is only one morality. There are moral and immoral religions which differ as much in precept as in emotion. But there is only one morality, which has been, is, and must be forever, an instinct in the hearts of all civilized men, as certain and unalterable as their outward bodily form, and which receives

from religion not law, but hope of felicity." The Christian religion is essentially a moral religion ; but it is vastly more, because it recognizes in love for God and love for man the vital principle of the moral law. In the following respects it is preeminent over all other faiths :

I. Christianity is the only religion that does for man what he cannot do for himself ; that furnishes any help outside himself to aid him in his battle with the world and with his own evil heart. It represents a hand stretched down from heaven ; and the groping, imploring human hands that are locked in the clasp of the Christ-hand are washed from the stains of doubt and the blackness of sin, and are led over obstacle and through temptation and sorrow to a peace which no system of philosophy or ethics has ever offered. Thousands have been snatched from the defaulter's shame, and the harlot's despair, and the gambler's self-destroying hand, and the drunkard's grave, by the saving grace of Jesus Christ. And thousands of sinners purified and made strong by the faith of Jesus are asking the unbeliever with startling significance, "What has your way of thinking done for you ? Has it made you better, or stronger,

or happier? Has it enabled you to endure the disappointments and sorrows of existence with greater fortitude and resignation? Has it helped you to disentangle the perplexities of your life? Has it given you faith in an Infallible Principle of Love that permits and wills even all that you suffer?" And his answer is in the negative. He admits the philosophy heralded as an improvement upon that of Jesus Christ to be a failure. Christianity beholds a personal Providence watching and guarding us; a God who answers prayer and shapes our lives and our eternal destinies, whose judgment is unerring, whose ordering is always for the best, whose long-suffering is inexhaustible. Our God is not nebular or remote, like the God of other systems; but he is present in our lives, where his guidance is so mysterious and tenderly discriminating that many times we hardly suspect its presence. In the fifth Logion of the Gospel according to the Egyptians, Jesus saith: "Wherever there is one believer, I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me. Cleave the wood and there am I." Christ present in all things, always with us and in us; the loving, helpful friend, enabling us to do what we are power-

less to accomplish alone; the brother who never misunderstands. How sweet it is to be understood. How we prize human sympathy and support; but the sympathy and support of Heaven as realized by the Christian are far sweeter. Remember that Jesus alone has taught us to call God by the endearing name of "father;" thus, as Drummond says, "importing into religion the grandest word of human language."

II. Christianity is the only religion that wipes guilt away, that offers any hope or consolation to the sinner, that lifts the burden of his remorse. Of other religions the conscience-stricken offender is ever asking:

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?"

The child of sorrow is forever asking this of other faiths, and they are speechless. They are not dispensers of consolation, healers of the broken heart. But when I turn to this New Testament, I find its every page glistering with the bright promises of forgiveness and spiritual refreshment. I am bidden to come freely unto the meek and lowly in

heart for the rest my soul longs for. "In the exhaustless catalogue of Heaven's mercies to mankind," wrote Dickens, "the power of finding some germs of comfort in the hardest trials must ever occupy the foremost place."

None but Jesus has ever ventured to say: "Come unto me, all ye who labor," who are oppressed with sins, who are sickened with cares and disappointments and fears for the future, and I will lighten your load, and break the galling yoke of pride, and selfishness, and worldly indulgence; for I am accessible to the most obscure, the most depraved. "And you shall have rest unto your souls;" not inaction, for there is no true rest in a life of indolence—in the paradise of the sluggard, in the cocoon of the Buddhist, in the heaven of the coward, where there are no ideals to be realized, no victories to be won. This is not the rest Christ promises; but rest in harmony with the laws of beauty and love and poetry, a conscious joyous existence in eternity where I am known of mine, forgiven of God, and pledged to a gladsome service. Show me such hope, such comfort, outside of Christianity.

III. Christianity is the only religion that

transforms character and makes it beautiful; that transfuses God into a career; thus planting a divine germ, a vital principle, which slowly and spontaneously expands in the sunshine of a magnetic love. You are struck by the sweetness, the symmetry, the indescribable charm of such a character. You watch its daily growth in a culture that is not of the earth; and you are forced to admit the fact that no other religion can develop so true a quality of holiness, such a combination of the good and the beautiful. Far be it from us to deny that Buddha and Confucius prescribe admirable rules of conduct. The ethics of Cicero and Seneca, of Aurelius and Boethius, command our respect. But all are practical failures because, while they erect high moral standards, they confer no power on man to live thereafter. And the reason is that mere morality is mechanical. It is the dead diamond, lustrous but soulless. It flashes in its neutral setting, but kindles no fires of aspiration. The difference between a moral man and a Christian man lies not in the character of their deeds, but in the motives that incite those deeds, in the spirit of the life. One rivets his eyes to the Star of Bethlehem, and treads onward and

upward with an energy nursed by its ray ; the other gazes out into an empty heaven with the stare of a figure in marble or wax.

IV. Finally, Christianity is the only religion which, regarding death as "the climax of communion between the soul and God," assures an immortality with high aim and elevated desire. For this intensely positive future, the Christian lives. His religion teaches him the deathlessness of the soul ; that what is called death is only a graduation from one school of life for matriculation in another on the part of an indestructible unit that can never die ; and that the growth of this immortal unit beyond the grave will be in the line of its deliberate choice here. Selfish, sensual, annihilation heavens have been imagined by man. But the heaven of Christianity is one in which the souls of the departed possess consciousness and memory, sympathy, sensibility to pleasure and pain, and to experiences of happiness and misery. It is a heaven where those who have gone before keep us ever in remembrance ; where there will be recognition of friends and exchanges of histories when lips meet lips again. The Bible nowhere excludes the thought of recognition ; nowhere hints that the love stronger

than death, the personal affections that are the mightiest agencies in the formation of character here, are to be swept out of existence as the murmur of eternity breaks upon the ear, plunging the soul into an isolation that either knows no love or finds no scope for its activity. The heaven of Christianity is a heaven of conscious life, of fellowship with God and the redeemed, of growth and progress of soul; not of swoon, or absorption in a Something-Nothing God, but of activity, of advance in knowledge, of development of capacities latent at death, of slumbering genius unrecognized on earth, till the soul arrives at the perfection of refinement, power, and happiness.

There is no hope like this in any of the great religions of the Orient. One by one, as we take them up for consideration, we shall find them wanting in these four conspicuous characteristics of Christianity.

Such is the faith we Christians profess. Is it not our duty to make it superlatively attractive; so full of the comfort and sympathy men are longing for that our Christ and his Gospel will seem to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, as a gushing spring to the fainting traveler, as the bright

beam of outer day spied by the poor prisoner through his dungeon grate? And may we not commit the error of exaggerating the requirements for admission to the fold, remembering that no soul is too low to be reached by the sympathy of Jesus. We are the almoners of the riches of God's grace. Let us make friends, then, of the outcast, the misguided, the souls that hesitate between doubt and conviction in these days of mental unrest when the scale-pans of faith and no-faith tremble ominously in even balance. For every soul, I care not how black it seem, is like the Cavern of Luray—perhaps dark to the casual glance through some crevice, but when the torch is lifted and its recesses are flooded with the light of the Gospel it will flash, like the cave, with supernatural beauty.

Christianity makes love the mainspring of its ethics, and love impels to action. The sounds of a great battle are distinctly audible; and it ill becomes Christian men who have the requisite ability and knowledge to stand aloof from the battle-ground of rational controversy. I say battle-ground, and battle-ground of fearless disputation, in contrast to the slumber-chamber of willful indifference

and the quadrangle of imbecile denunciation from afar. We are face to face with error in many monstrous shapes, and this error cannot be overcome by blinding our eyes to it, or by discordant notes of warning, or by the occasional remonstrances of a handicapped pulpit. The times demand an active participation in the warfare by men and women who have rubbed the sleepy-seeds from their eyes and are fully awake to the startling necessities and perils of the hour.

I cannot but believe that in the providence of God the day has come when the great forces of this world are about to combine for the spread of enlightenment and truth. I look upon the Spanish-American War as having been permitted by Providence in order to arouse the old American spirit and convert this nation into a mighty imperial people physically able and intellectually adapted to shape and sway the destinies of the earth ; to carry our flag, with our civilization, institutions and religion, to the uttermost heathen, to the people sitting in darkness, and make them glad unto temporal happiness and eternal salvation. God be praised that England has joined hands with us in this great and holy mission. Race-

patriotism is the talk of the hour. We are of the same stock—possessed of the same unfaltering adherence to principle, the same deathless love of country. England's mission hitherto has been to carry her civilization outward into the wide world of squalor and heathenism; ours, to receive into this fair land the heterogeneous masses from other countries and unify and educate them here, making them useful and intelligent members of this great commonwealth. So transcendently successful has been the double policy (differently directed yet single in its issue) that to-day one hundred and fifty millions of human beings, in Great Britain and her colonial possessions in Africa, Asia, and Oceania, in the United States and in the Dominion of Canada, write or converse in the English language. And one quarter of the landed surface of the earth is under the dominion of English and American people, who rule one third of the population of the globe. England and the United States together can say to the nations, "Do this," and it will be done. The United States and England together can put an end to wrong belief and wrong action in every corner of the world; can terminate once and forever Turkish

atrocities and the Muhammadan slave trade ; can break the chains of every oppressed race by a single mandate ; can flash light into the dark strongholds of heathenism and savagery, and bring the Hindu and the Buddhist, the Confucian, the Taoist and the Shintoist of Japan to the feet of the Saviour, and thus to a perfect acceptance of the principle of love as the law and inspiration of human existence. When the Orient apprehends this principle, the Orient is ours.

What is Christianity More than Hinduism, the Pantheistic Religion of India?

(By their fruits ye shall know them. Matthew vii. 16.)

A RELIGION not professed and practiced within reach of investigation enjoys this decided advantage over those that are accessible to personal criticism, viz., its radical defects are hardly perceptible, while the imagination, particularly if the religion be eulogized by native professors and enthusiastic oriental scholars, encircles it with an aureola of graces. Remoteness in time and place, tending to the obscuration of imperfections and the looming of merits, assuredly imparts the traditional enchantment to our view. No faith has been more the subject of such intellectual mirage than Hinduism. But when you hear it discussed by its own swâmis your potential admiration must shortly be transformed into actual disgust. It will not stand the definition given to it by your mental lorgnette. You are struck by its vagueness. You can not fathom the meaning of those who attempt to analyze its potpourri of dogmas, for hardly two are in accord. You will not accept its final uncompromising

creed that nothing really exists but the one universal spirit, or impersonal self, Brahm, and that whatever appears to exist separately is a mere illusion ; that this Brahm manifests himself variously in sensible things ; and that all living beings are but emanations from him, and ultimately are absorbed into his essence—human beings through 8,400,000 reincarnations and 30,000 cycles of woe.

In order intelligently to comprehend the religions of India, we must make ourselves acquainted with two early Hindu works which stand in very much the same relation to Hinduism as does our Bible to Christianity. These works are the Veda (the oldest book in Indo-European literature, dating from 2000 B. C.) and the Bhagavad Gîtâ, or Divine Song. The Veda, or Science, is a collection of historical hymns, chants, prayers, and sacrificial rites ; as well as of incantations and spells in the efficacy of which, to ward off disease, inspire love, endow with riches, and bring misfortunes to one's enemies, the ancient Hindus were unquestioning believers. Among the Vedic writings are the Brâhmanas, which contain ancient rituals and priestly dicta on matters of religious worship ; and the Upanishads, treatises of a theosophic

nature reflecting the earliest attempts of the Hindu mind to explore the mysteries of existence. "In the Vedic Hymns," says Professor Hopkins, "man fears the gods and imagines God. In the Brâhmanas, man subdues the gods, and fears God. In the Upanishads, man ignores the gods, and becomes God."

A number of the Vedic hymns suggest a primordial belief in One Supreme Being; while others clearly evidence a descent from monotheism to polytheism. In the 1,017 metrical hymns of the Rig-Veda (Veda of Songs,—by several hundred authors, and comprising 10,580 verses), "thrice eleven" divinities are addressed, the principal of whom are the sun, the moon, the day, fire, the storm (Indra), the god of waters, the dawn-goddess (Ushas), and the earth. These gods were immortal; clothed with power to answer prayer, and punish those who offended them. Certain hymns appear to embody a conception of one omnipotent, self-existent Deity, "God above all gods," "that One alone who has upheld the spheres." "Wise poets," says the Rig-Veda, "make the Beautiful-winged, though he is one, manifold by words." "He is the only master of the world; he fills

heaven and earth. He gives life and strength ; all the other gods seek for his blessing ; death and immortality are but his shadow." Thus the mytho-poetic religion of the Veda would seem to stand out in mezzo-rilievo from a monotheistic background. The Brahmins regard it in the light of a revelation from the Creator to men ; and their teachers declare that there can not be a Saviour unless he be a revealer of the truth eternally enwrapped in the Veda.

The parts of the Veda especially studied and quoted as authority to-day by educated Hindus are the Upanishads, or Confidential Communications, dating from 700 B.C. The religion of these treatises is pantheistic. They deal with the deepest mysteries and most perplexing problems of human life and human destiny ; with the genesis of the universe and of the soul of man ; and in them, it has been said, "religion awakes with fuller spiritual life than is found in any other pre-Christian system."

The teachings of these Upanishads are the tap-root of six great Hindu systems of philosophy, the chief of which is the Vedanta (end of the Veda), with its pantheistic belief in one ingenerable, immutable, incorruptible

Reality ; its autochthonal doctrine that this Spiritual Absolute exists truly, everything else falsely, and that the only truth is the unity of all souls in this one Impersonal Soul ; its theosophic principle that a tenuous astral wrapper clings to the soul at death, the vesture of transmigrating spirits as they pass from body to body and from sphere to sphere through countless series of incarnations ; and its extravagant claim that Brahm, as the operative cause of the existence, continuance, and dissolution of the world, is the real author of all our acts, and we are not responsible. You may remember that this was the defense of the assassin of President Garfield, " I am God's man ; God compelled me to fire the fatal shot." " The soul is not an actor," are Krishna's words ; it is only the man deluded by egoism that *imagines* himself possessed of free will. We wander in God like helpless somnambulists. Personal sin is therefore impossible.

The Kathâ, the best known Upanishad, teaches transmigration. " At death, some are reborn as organic bodies, others go into inorganic matter, according to their work and knowledge." This doctrine satisfactorily explained the sufferings of seemingly innocent

persons, finding the cause of these in crimes committed in a preexistent state. In the pathetic Episode of King Nala, Damayanti the Lotus-eyed, when abandoned by her husband in the wilderness, thus gives utterance to her grief:

“No good fortune e’er attends me ; of what guilt is this the
doom ?

Not a sin can I remember ; not the least to living man,
Or in deed, or thought, or language. Of what guilt is this the
doom ?

In some former life committed expiate I now the sin ;
To this infinite misfortune, hence by penal justice doomed.
Lost my husband, lost my kingdom, from my kindred separate ;
Separate from noble Nala, from my children far away,
Widowed of my rightful guardian in the serpent-haunted
wood.”

A work which reflects the philosophy of the Upanishads, and is believed to be the joint production of a number of authors and editors in the first or second century A. D., is the Bhagavad Gîtâ, or the Divine Song, called also the Lord’s Lay and the Song of the Adorable, by far the most important work for the study of those who desire to understand the religious belief of the higher classes in India. This Bhagavad Gîtâ is an anthology of the best things in Hinduism. Its philosophy is eclectic, and it seems to represent an attempt to harmonize the several

conflicting native systems by rejecting the conglomerate but retaining the gems ; to present the nonpareils of Hindu wisdom, the essence of all the sacred writings. Mohini Mohun Chatterji, the translator of a recent edition of this philosophical poem published in Boston "for the benefit of those in search of spiritual light," calls attention to two hundred and fourteen passages that are paralleled in the Bible ; not with a view of proving that there was borrowing on either side, but rather to establish his position that both New Testament and Gîtâ are revelations from the Hindu god Vishnu, equally worthy of acceptance. The effrontery implied in presenting such an issue to the American public is artfully seconded by a dangerous commentary, completing the equipment of the poem for its mission as a deceiver of cultured thousands who are ignorant of Hindu philosophy and hence do not perceive that most of the parallels are fanciful, are mere coincidences, like many in Seneca and Aurelius, or are transcriptions from early Hindu versions of the Scriptures ; who do not appreciate the motive of the translator, or recognize the intermixture of Christian conceptions and the plunder of Christian

terminology ; who fail to detect the absurdities, foolish repetitions, and conspicuous contradictions ; and who are dazzled by the occasional sublimity of the delineations. The theosophy of this work antedates the Christian era ; but there is unmistakable evidence of interpolations, of modifications of an original text, evincing an effort to import into the poem much that pertains to the history and nature of Christianity—to make the religion of India, in other words, as Christian as possible.

The Bhagavad Gîtâ opens by withdrawing the reader for a while from the tumult of a great national war and introducing him to a profound theological dialogue between the god Krishna (Vishnu) and his favorite knight, Arjuna, which dialogue constitutes the poem. On the eve of a decisive battle, with Arjuna hesitating to precipitate the conflict which may bring him a crown but at the cost of many lives, the deity seeks to remove the scruples of the knight in the following sublime argument, in some respects among the most exalted utterances of man :—

“Ne’er was the time when I was not, nor thou, nor yonder
kings of earth :
Hereafter, ne’er shall be the time when one of us shall cease
to be.

The soul, within its mortal frame, glides on thro' childhood,
youth, and age ;

Then in another form renewed, renews its stated course
again.

All indestructible is He that spread the living universe ;

And who is he that shall destroy the work of the Inde-
structible ?

Corruptible these bodies are that wrap the everlasting soul—
The eternal, unimaginable soul. Whence on to battle,
Bhârata !

For he that thinks to slay the soul, or he that thinks the soul
is slain,

Are fondly both alike deceived : it is not slain—it slayeth not ;
It is not born—it doth not die ; past, present, future knows
it not ;

Ancient, eternal, and unchanged, it dies not with the dying
frame.

Who knows it incorruptible, and everlasting, and unborn,

What heeds he whether he may slay, or fall himself in battle
slain ?

As their old garments men cast off, anon new raiment to
assume,

So casts the soul its worn-out frame, and takes at once
another form.

The weapon cannot pierce it through, nor wastes it the con-
suming fire ;

The liquid waters melt it not, nor dries it up the parching
wind ;

Impenetrable and unburned ; impermeable and undried ;

Perpetual, ever-wandering, firm, indissoluble, permanent,

Invisible, unspeakable."*

Such an elevated treatment as this of
the soul's immortality, which, *en passant*, is
transplanted bodily from the Kathâ Upani-

* Milman's translation.

shad, is nicely calculated to deceive the unwary Western reader, so ready in his encomiums as to the lofty thoughts and moral grandeur of the Gîtâ. But, if the same be analyzed, it will be seen unmistakably to reflect the doctrines of transmigration, antemundane life, and personal pantheism.

The pith and marrow of Hinduism is contained in this poem. All real existence of the individual soul is denied, and the eternal identity of a given soul with every other human soul and with the Soul of God is flatly proclaimed. The apparent existence of many souls or selves, explains the translator, is due to the operation of a power called Falsehood because it is not the Spirit of God, which is the only Reality. The Gîtâ further teaches that the Supreme Being is one and secondless, and the true self or innermost spirit in us is no other than this Supreme Being. Therefore every person who abstracts his mind from all considerations of the false self, his apparent soul, can justly say, "I am God. God is, and he and I are one!" "The wise man is Myself," says the god Krishna. "This is my opinion, because the wise man is established on the road to the superior goal, which is Myself."

Think of a God Supreme having only an opinion, and actually presenting it as a debatable question. Such is the pantheism of the Gîtâ, evident in many other passages, to wit: "The Supreme Spirit is the act of offering. The Supreme Spirit is sacrificial butter, offered by the sacrificer who is the Supreme Spirit, into the fire which is the Supreme Spirit." "The universe is produced out of the Divine Substance which never changes. It is not a thing, but it is the power of the Deity." Chatterji feebly explains that it is identical with the Deity, but at the same time the Deity is not the universe. They are, however, identical.

The God *we* worship is not an abstraction; but the self-conscious, self-consistent, personal Author and Finisher of nature infinite, absolute, perfect—in whom the human reason discerns a comprehensible beginning, an all-sufficient cause, and a sovereign guidance to a premeditated and clearly foreseen termination. And the universe, to quote the words of Dr. William M. Bryant,* "the universe in Space, hanging on nothing, as Job described it, can be but the perpetually complete utterance of this Perfect Mind as

* In "Life, Death, and Immortality."

the absolutely spontaneous, self-moved, all inclusive One, beyond which there is no Reality whatever."

Christianity teaches the presence of God in nature and the universe, but not the identity of God with nature and the universe, or of nature and the universe with God. This latter philosophy it has ever deprecated. Immanence and identity are separable ideas. An able Catholic writer* recently said: "Like pantheism, Christianity admits God in the world and the world in God. Unlike pantheism, however, it does not make us frail mortals of God's own substance, nor God of ours, but leaves him superior to us by the whole length and breadth of his infinity. Yet does he surround us all, men and things alike; support us all, empower us all to act; and without his aid would we one and all, earth and heaven, cease to be, as darkness follows when the sun withdraws its light. Thus the very desideratum which pantheism is supposed to furnish, namely, a God in the world and a world in God, is found in Christianity more nobly and more rationally expressed."

Further, the God of Christianity is not

* Edmund T. Shanahan.

only universal, but he is also concrete ; concrete in the incarnation Christ Jesus ; not an impersonal Christ, but a specific person on whom the heart's affections may be fixed. As President Hyde of Bowdoin College remarks : " A Father who has begotten no Son, and sent forth no Spirit into the world, is to all intents and purposes no God at all. The abstract universal and nonentity are equivalents." No wonder the Hindu calls his god both Something and Nothing, both Supreme and Not-Supreme.

The human mind naturally thinks in particulars and, therefore, demands concrete expression. The soul of man cannot long remain loyal to a God who is nothing more to it than a nebular philosophical abstraction. The universal must become resolved into the particular. The intangible Divine must become incarnate in the tangible human. The impalpable spiritual must apparel itself in flesh and blood in order to impress men and women with its reality—in order to kindle their love, enlist their service, inspire the sacrifice of their fortunes and very lives. And this is what we have in Christianity ; a human brother, a concrete Mediator between us and the infinite Jehovah. To this

concrete Saviour the human intellect can rivet itself. This personal Jesus, human affections can center themselves upon, and human reason can apprehend, and human hope embrace, and human faith forever trust. The keynote of our faith is sounded by St. John in the thirty-first verse of the twentieth chapter of his Gospel: "That ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." There is no Oriental uncertainty about this. The purpose of the Gospel is clearly set forth, to save men through faith in a crucified Christ. Had I no other evidence of supernatural wisdom in Christianity than the fact that the God of Christianity sent into this world, for the salvation of sinners and the consolation of the stricken, a personal, concrete, accessible Saviour, Christ Jesus, that fact alone would be convincing!

And as for man, Christianity does not make him one with God, the same in substance with the perfect personal Wisdom and the perfect personal Love. But it regards every human being as a thought of God committed to this earth for its embodiment, development, and execution; not as God incarnate, for Christianity knows but a single incarna-

tion, even Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made.

What a contrast between the loose pantheism of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, which declares that those who worship whatever God they choose are sure to gain the heaven they long for; and which together with the personality of God blots out man's responsibility for sin—and the clear idea of the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of Christ, and the immortality of the individual and responsible soul, as projected in the New Testament.

Nor is this God of the Gîtâ a god of love like the God of Christianity. He is depicted as the one Creator, Regulator, and Destroyer of the universe and all it contains. As the universe is declared to be God, this god, in his rôle as the destroyer of the universe, figures as a suicide—and this is moon-struck madness. He is defined as having no relation to anything, and declares, "There is none either hated or loved by me." He does not hate the vicious or love the virtuous; and yet the Second Hexad closes with this

striking contradiction on the part of the truly inscrutable God of the Gîtâ: "Those who worship this immortality-bearing law, regarding Me as the supreme end, are excessively beloved by me."

There can be no love in a religion that enforces the distinctions of caste and exhorts to a life of quietism or passive meditation. "He whose joy is within," says the god of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, "whose diversion is within, whose light is within, is the man of right knowledge. Becoming the Supreme God, he attains to effacement in the Supreme God." To our amazement we are subsequently informed that renunciation or cessation of action is the same thing as action, because it implies an act; and that the acme of renunciation is that state in which the intention to renounce is also renounced. The chapter ends with the following admission on the part of the astonishing Blessed Lord of the Bhagavad Gîtâ, the infinitely attributed Attributeless, the neither Aught nor Naught, the Something-Nothing God, the Supreme Paradox—who states with characteristic human reserve, "The man of meditation, in my opinion, is superior to the man of penance and to men of action. This is my opinion."

Of course there are other opinions differing from that of Almighty God ; and again we are forced on to debatable ground.

The God of the Gîtâ describes himself as a passive on-looker ; as Pure Indifference ; and the great aim of Brahman philosophy is to teach men to abstain from actions both good and bad. Actions it regards as the shackles of the soul. When the soul rids itself of action by continuous contemplation it will return to the condition of separated spirit, its proper impersonal nature ; to "the fontal unity of undifferenced spiritual existence," and become insphered in Brahm. So the promise given by this deity, of heavenly enjoyments in a future state as the result of meritorious works which he has just discouraged, if not forbidden, must, to the devotee who in a previous chapter is told to expect effacement, involve two preposterous contradictions. There is no such thing as rational immortality in the Indic system.

In contrast to this ascetic inertness is the Christian life of active energy, the faith accompanied with works, the loving to live that we may live to love. The Christian does not flee from the world, but remains at work in it. Flight would unfit him for citizenship in

the Kingdom of the Hereafter. The spirit of his religion is one of utmost warm-heartedness, conditioned by a recognition of equality in rights and conditioning in turn the existence of true democracy. Chatterji publishes his desire to banish all "unbrotherliness" from the earth; and yet this Song of the Adorable that he has so artfully edited emphasizes the duties of caste before all other obligations. Its spirit is thus distinctively antagonistic to forces now at work to achieve the unification of mankind.

Such are the main teachings of a book that is most popular in India and most widely circulated in translations through Western lands; which figures as the text of Hindu swâmis now among us because, they declare, America is starving for spiritual refreshment, and because, in spite of the ignorance of its upper classes and the savagery of the rank and file, there are many souls thirsting for higher things; a thirst which Hinduism is going to assuage. Hinduism! I have shown you the best of it; but when you scan the pages of its other religious books you will hardly fail to approve Max Müller's numerous omissions from his translations of the Sacred Texts of the East. "Had many pas-

sages not been suppressed," he explains, "I should have been prosecuted for publishing obscene literature." And these are the religious oracles, these are the Bibles that are lauded to the skies by Hindu swâmis, amid the approving smiles of hare-brained American maids and mothers—women supremely ignorant of the true nature and trend of Hinduism and equally so, I say it to their shame! of the essential doctrines of pure Christianity; women who are utter strangers to the original Indo-Iranian texts, and wholly unconscious of the amazing preeminence of the Bible from a literary as well as a moral standpoint; women easily captivated by supple-chapped Hindu graduates from English colleges, and always on the *qui vive* to indorse every slur upon the religion of their fathers and the moral perfection of Jesus.

Pantheism or the identity of the universe with God, reincarnation, ascetic inaction—the upper classes of India hold these tenets of the Gîtâ, while the millions are steeped in fetishism, and worship a multitude of gods. You may well ask, What have three thousand years of pantheism, ascetic practices, caste distinction, rhythmic breathing to free the soul from the sufferings of transmigration,

silent concentration to shorten the time of reaching a perfection which is effacement, revolting methods of self-torture as means of growing in holiness—what have three thousand years of all this done for India? “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

You have your answer in the social wretchedness beneath which India is prostrate; the poverty, the squalor, the neglect of sanitary requirements, and in the legitimate outcome of it all, the cholera, the leprosy, the bubo plague, the famine, as every-day experiences; in the heart-rending ignorance of the superstition-ridden millions, the worshipers of backyard stocks and niche-set images and grisly shapes asquat in the mandirs and idol-houses; in the prevalent fetishism, or adoration of the spirits believed to be incorporated in amulets of tigers' teeth and serpents' fangs and quaintly-fashioned shells. You have your answer in the perverted conceptions of morality that approve a god of robbers, whose Thugs choke their victims to death as an act of religion; that accept deities who are represented as licentious drunkards throughout the national literature. You have your answer in the frightful immorality of certain sects whose amorous gods delight in adultery

and incest ; whose rites are characterized by the most shocking sensuality ; whose priestly lechers have woven the details of Christian story into the flesh-colored legends of Krishna and have stolen from Christianity the notion of a Trinity in order to harmonize the opposing claims of Brahmanism, Krishnaism, and Sivaism ; and whose Woman Trinity, composed of the female principles of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, with its worship full of sadism and bestial abominations, would seem to out-Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians.

You have your answer in such absurdities as the beast-hospitals of western India, where all kinds of invalided animals, including epizoa, which superstition forbids to be killed and so put out of misery, are supported and treated, and where loving care that is due to humanity alone is lavished on brutes ; where cities in which God is denied, man worshiped, and vermin revered, are subjected to special taxation for the maintenance of sacred rats ; and where holy monkeys affected with the bubo plague are left at liberty to infect human beings with deadly microphytes, the sanitary authorities being powerless to interfere in the face of a fanatical opposition.

You have your answer in the miracle-mongering and trickery, and in the daily spectacles of filthy *fainéants* standing in distressful attitudes, with arms upstretched till muscles stiffen, with eyes fixed upon the sun till the sense of sight is burned out, with finger-nails clinched in doubled-up hands so that the life of inaction, the object of perverted desire, becomes imperative.

Finally, you have your answer in the fashion of child marriage, which is the climax curse of India. Matrimony is enjoined as a religious obligation at the age of five or six. Babes are born to children of twelve. Nervous systems are bankrupt at twenty; and society is largely composed of emasculated degenerates. Widowhood (and there are child widows as young as nine years of age) is regarded as a punishment for crimes committed in a preexistent state; hence these child-widows are treated as reprobate; as under the ban of God's displeasure. Cursed by her husband's relatives as the contriver of his death and cast into a prison cell with a life sentence, the lot of an Indian girl-widow is one of helpless, hopeless misery. —Creeds are indeed to be rated by their products.

Hinduism is a failure because, by teaching ultimate effacement through innumerable transmigrations of the soul, it virtually proclaims the doctrine that birth into the world is the greatest of misfortunes.

Because it perpetuates under the authority of religion, the social tyranny of caste, whereby certain privileges or certain disabilities are transmitted from parents to children; whereby the laboring classes are cut off from the kindly interest and ministrations of the better elements of society, and thus insurmountable barriers are erected to separate man from his brother.

Because it degrades woman from the position she occupied in primitive Aryan communities, where, although the practice of bride-purchase prevailed, polygamy was rare. Christianity sufficiently establishes its divinity by the moral and social uplift it has always meant for the sex that its Founder forever glorified through the motherhood of Mary the Virgin. The gods of Hindustan care only for men.

Because it seeks to obliterate the God-established differences between man and brute. The brute does nothing but live. He has made no advances during the six thousand

years he has been under observation, his instincts being mature at birth. He has no aspirations, no ambitions; he does not live for the future; he is without responsibility. Man differs from the mere animal in that he lives for something, consciously and responsibly lives. But Indian Yogis and Mahatmas are only human vegetables that reek and rot in the fetid atmosphere of the falsest religion devised by intelligent man. The pursuivants of Christ are distinguished by the cognizance of Progress—a widespread, eager, and enlightened progress; a progress in intelligence, knowledge, and charity, without sacrifice of Christian sentiment or Christian principle. Hinduism is all maudlin visions relating to a foggy future; Christianity concerns itself with the exigencies of an intensely real present. The one has been characterized as all spirit and life; the other, as all letter and death. Christianity has evolved from barbaric germs the mighty nations that control the world's affairs. Hinduism has dragged from the heights of social and religious purity a race once foremost in literature, art, and military power, to sink it in the depths of a frightful obscenity tinselled with religious names and flaunted in the temples

of the gods. The intellectual and moral status of the Christian world to-day is the strongest evidence that can be demanded or adduced of the truth of the religion which has wrought it.

How, then, is it possible to be sincerely enamored of such a faith as Hinduism? On what ground is such vaporing as that of Mrs. Besant warrantable? "We have for years sent hosts of missionaries, with millions of money, to convert the Hindus, with little success. Now they send over a few men at slight expense, and have converted everybody." The last allegation is false; but it is unfortunately true that misguided Christian teachers went into India with a cross in one hand and a scourge in the other; and that the unprincipled representatives of Christian nations have for four centuries interpreted to the natives, from a purely selfish point of view, Christ's command to love one's neighbor as one's self. The tongue spoke of charity, the arm drove a poniard to the heart. The fault has not been with the poor heathen, but with the false Christianity that has been exhibited to them.

When we are confronted with the superstitions, the shocking sensuality, the awful



degradation that are the legitimate products of Hinduism, our hearts cry out in a great longing to set things right. Is it not enough to melt the whole Christian church into a unity, an alliance of spiritual forces against these powers of darkness? Has it not, at this dawn hour of the twentieth century, become the duty of Christians to fuse all points of disagreement in one great heart's love for the Saviour, and carry the message of his sacrifice and resurrection as a single consistent army of the Cross to the nations from whom God still is hidden by the umbra of an eclipsing theosophy; who, looking heavenward for the face of a life-giving Sun, meet only the total shadow of an intercepting hopelessness, projected through a vast full of too distant stars?

What is Christianity More Than Buddhism, With Its Attractive Analogies to the Practical Teachings of Our Own Faith?

(They have no helper. Job xxx. 13. I do nothing of myself. John viii. 28.)

DEAN STANLEY somewhere said: "The great aim which God has placed before the human intellect is the quest of truth—truth for its own sake. And," he adds, "the most excellent service universities or teachers can render to the human reason in this arduous enterprise is not to restrain or to blindfold it, but to clear aside every obstacle, to open wide the path, to chase away the phantoms." It is in the spirit of this wholesome counsel that I approach the subject of Buddhism, with the purpose of laying bare to your view the heart of its gospel. What is there in the so-called "wisdom-religion" that has bewitched intellectual thousands in Europe and America? What charm about it to give origin to the impression that it can "lift us into larger power and gladness?" What the secret of effect in the seductive pictures that are limned of its beauty in the boudoirs of the superlatively

refined? Will this "divine science, which *the chosen noble few* have known since man first recognized himself as a god," be found to retain its seemingly attractive features when illuminated by the search-lights of truth?

Let us first glance at its place in history. Buddhism represents an intellectual revolt against the religion of the Brahmans, against sacerdotalism, caste, and ecclesiastical corruptions; and this revolt a reader of the Upanishads is constrained to anticipate. He is sensible of a lull before the cyclone, and he is not surprised to detect a storm-center soon after at Kapilavastu, the capital of the Sâkyas, whose prince Siddhârtha became the Buddha, the foremost reformer of the non-Christian world.

As Buddhism sprung from the Vedic and Brahman systems, it has much in common with them. But, unlike Hinduism, it is atheistic. Hinduism is chiefly concerned with God; Buddhism with man. The founder of the latter system brought himself to believe that a loving Father was unnecessary. So far as worship is involved, there is no God to the disciple of Buddha. The late Bishop of Calcutta recounts that he once asked a Buddhist, whom he found at prayers in a

native temple, what he was praying for. The answer was, "Nothing." "To whom are you offering prayers?" he continued. "I am praying to nobody," was the characteristic response. A Buddhist cannot pray as do we, for he cannot conceive of a personal Providence; therefore he has nothing to pray to. His apparent prayer is meditation on the reputed perfections of Buddha and on the hope of final effacement in a state called Nirvâna, implying the extinction of personal identity. Nirvâna is defined by modern Buddhists as "a condition of total cessation of changes; of perfect rest; of the absence of desire, and illusion, and sorrow; of the total obliteration of everything that goes to make up the physical man. Before reaching Nirvâna, man is constantly being re-born; when he reaches Nirvâna, he is re-born no more."

In Nirvâna, according to another authority, there is "complete fading out and cessation of desire. Therefore is Nirvâna called a letting go, a loosing hold, a relinquishment and non-adhesion. For Nirvâna is one; but its names, based on its oppositions, are many—to wit, complete fading out, complete cessation, a letting go, a loosing hold, a relinquishment, a non-adhesion, the perishing of passion,

the perishing of infatuation, the perishing of desire, non-origination, deliverance from conception, deliverance from re-birth."

Buddhism, moreover, makes every man his own Saviour, or attainer of annihilation in this Eternal Nothing, this Essenceless Quiet. It is thus out of harmony with the central tenet of Christian teaching, that man can be saved only through the merits and sacrifice of God's own Son. All are doomed to suffer in their own persons, and not vicariously, either in the present life or in future states of existence. The penalty of sin is re-birth. Human units may assume an indefinite number of forms. He who is to-day a man may, in previous states, have led the life of a horse, dog, bird, fish, snake, worm. The doctrine of re-births is founded on the theory that "perfect justice, equilibrium, and adjustment are inherent in the universal law of Nature; and that one life is not long enough for the reward or punishment of a man's deeds. The great circle of re-births will be more or less quickly run according to the preponderating purity or impurity of the several lives of the individual."* Like Hinduism, Buddhism teaches renunciation of action and self-mortification as means

* Olcott's "A Buddhist Catechism."

of putting an end to re-births and hastening the final doom of effacement.

A multitude of worthless legends obscures the life-history of Buddha, and makes it difficult to construct an authentic biography. The story of his career assumed its present form about 600 A. D. He appears to have been a warrior-prince of the Sâkyas of Oude, who at the age of twenty-nine (about 530 B. C.) renounced his kingdom, and went out into the world, actuated (unlike the Prophet of Nazareth) by a purely selfish motive, viz., the desire to save his own soul. The improvement of the human race did not enter into his calculations.

The legend runs as follows: One night, when all were asleep, Siddhârtha arose, took a last look at his wife and infant son, mounted his favorite white horse, and rode to the palace gate. The Devas had thrown a deep sleep upon his father's guards, so they heard not the clatter of the horse's hoofs. The gate opened noiselessly of its own accord, and Siddhârtha rode away into the darkness. In the jungle he surrendered himself to Yoga discipline, with the hope of discovering the reason for human sorrow and of freeing himself from sickness, death, and rebirth. But

self-mortification made him no wiser. He finally reached the conclusion that knowledge could not be attained by mere fasting or self-inflicted torture, suddenly gave up the ascetic life, and seated himself under a Bo or Bodhi-tree (tree of knowledge) at Buddha-Gaya, to meditate. He had resolved to become Buddha, or Enlightened, for his own good alone. But while he sat beneath the Bo-tree, the story goes that the god Brahma came down and persuaded him to become a universal Buddha and save the human race. Buddhists point to this experience under the Bo-tree as the Great Awakening in which their prophet was inspired to preach a new gospel. The Light of Supreme Knowledge, the Light of the Four Truths, was suddenly flashed into his soul, and he became Buddha, the Illuminated One, the All-Wise.

The Four Noble Truths thus revealed to Buddha, and as he taught them, are :—

I. Birth is sorrow ; growth is sorrow ; sickness, death, age, is sorrow ; clinging to earthly things, separation from what we love, craving for what cannot be obtained—thus poetically put by Sir Edwin Arnold :—

“ First of the ‘ noble truths ’—how sorrow is
Shadow to life, moving where life doth move,

Not to be laid aside until one lays
 Living aside, with all its changing states,
 Birth, growth, decay, love, hatred, pleasure, pain,
 Being and doing ; how that none strips off
 These sad delights and pleasant griefs who lacks
 Knowledge to know them snares."

II. Birth and rebirth (the chain of reincarnation) result from the thirst for life, together with passion and desire.

III. The only escape from this thirst for life and its pleasures is the annihilation of desire.

IV. The only way of escape is by following the Eight-fold Path, the Good Law of Buddha, which leads to Nirvâna, viz.:

1. Right Views (freedom from delusion).
2. Right Aims (worthy of an intelligent man).
3. Right Speech (kindly, open, truthful).
4. Right Conduct (honest, peaceful, pure).
5. Right Livelihood (hurting no living thing).
6. Right Effort (in self-training and self-control).
7. Right Mindfulness (an active, watchful mind).
8. Right Contemplation (earnest thought on the mysteries of life).

These are the famous four great truths

and the eight-fold path so eulogized by American Buddhists—borrowed by the way from a Brahman source, for Buddha was anything but original. There is nothing remarkable about them. All they stand for, and infinitely more, is taught, and better taught, in the New Testament.

The sacred books of the Buddhists are called the Tripitaka, or Three Baskets. One is metaphysical, another disciplinary, and the third contains discourses for the laity with the aphorisms of Buddha. They are written in a dialect of Sanscrit, and are made up of 600,000 stanzas, representing, exclusive of repetitions, twice as much matter as our Bible. The altruism of the Tripitaka is illustrated in such precepts as the following:—

“Like a beautiful flower, full of color but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.

“As the bee collects nectar, and departs without injuring the flower, or its color and scent, so let the sage dwell on earth.

“Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, ‘It will not come near unto me.’ Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gathers it little by little.

“The succoring of mother and father, the cherishing of child and wife, and the following of a lawful thing—this is the greatest blessing.

“The giving of alms, the abstaining from sins, the eschewing of intoxicating drink, diligence in good deeds, reverence

and humility, contentment and gratitude—this is the greatest blessing.

“Let us live happily, then, though we call nothing our own; not hating those who hate us, free from greed among the greedy. We shall then be like the bright gods, feeding on happiness.”

This is the attar of Buddhistic philanthropy; the few distilled drops from thousands of precepts.

The Four Great Truths and Rules of Practical Conduct were first promulgated at Benares. Absence of all such malevolent opposition as Christianity militant encountered in storming the intrenched vice of the Roman Empire, the fascination of the neighbor-morality teachings, and the personal magnetism of Buddha himself,—explain his success. But the religion he founded, despite its ethical elements, and its humanitarian trend in deprecating war, in enjoining kindliness to man, and in substituting real for mere ceremonial righteousness, has never developed sufficient energy to supplant the older religion of any country in which it has secured a foothold. During a struggle of many centuries it disputed with Brahmanism for the supremacy of India. Pushed out at last to the northeast, it made its way into Thibet, China, and Japan, where it has demonstrated

its powerlessness to overthrow the revolting nature-worship of the Mongolian races. It exists side by side with Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism, and is accepted with them by those who profess these faiths. At the present day, the followers of this religion, who once outnumbered those of any other, have dwindled to about 100,000,000.

What, then, can be the secret of its successful appeal to people of higher culture? What explains the position of a Buddhist priest who declared at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago: "There is no better place in the world to propagate the teachings of Buddhism than America, where Christianity is merely an adornment of society and is deeply believed in by very few?" Is it that the Oriental upholders of Buddhism, recognizing its rapid loss of vitality and the relaxing of its grasp on the vast populations once loyal to its sway; foreseeing that it is destined to be swept from the earth by a combination of intellectual forces against which they are powerless to contend—are, in the hope of deferring the sky-set of their faith, turning to Europe and America and offering to Western Aryans, *as Buddhism*, a bastard system of altruism sugared with sweet extracts

from the Gospels, wholly unlike the faith that Buddha taught with "its corner-stone of atheism and its cap-stone of annihilation?"

A work that has done much to encourage the deception, by reason of its burlesque presentation of Buddhism in an up-to-date style of dress, is Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia," a poem full of noble sentiments, but which does not tell the true story of this faith, and is worthless as an historical or critical piece of literature. The beauty of the poem is the glimmer borrowed from Christian pearls; its ugliness, the gloom of native slime-pits. It purports to be a tale in verse of the life and teachings of Gautama Buddha, "the Saviour of the World," by an Indian Buddhist—who, however, plagiarized wholesale from the New Testament and the life of Christ to fleck with abnormal lights and colors a dead and hideous canvas. The black original is not wholly painted over; blotches of background stand out conspicuous amid the ingeniously applied re-touches. What of sublimity can a cultivated mind see in its doctrine of reincarnation?

"Life runs its round of living, climbing up
From mote, and gnat, and worm, reptile and fish,
Bird and shagged beast, man, demon, deva, God,
To clod and mote again."

Most degrading is the thought that a human soul has ever tenanted the body of a beast. Most repulsive, from the standpoint of intelligence and refinement, is Lord Buddha's explanation of how and why his heart took sudden fire at the first glance of the radiant Sâkya girl, Yasôdhara, whom he made his Queen :—

“ We were not strangers.

While the wheel of birth and death turns round

Past things and thoughts and buried lives come back.

I now remember, myriad rains ago,

What time I roamed Himala's hanging woods

A tiger, with my striped and hungry kind ;

I, who am Buddh [that is the avatar of a supreme god],
couched in the kusa grass

Gazing with green blinked eyes upon the herds

Which pastured near and nearer to their death.

.

Amid the beasts that were my fellows there,

Met in deep jungle or by reedy jheel,

A tigress, comeliest of the forest, set

The males at war. Her hide was lit with gold

Black-broidered like the veil Yasôdhara

Wore for me. Hot the strife waxed in that wood

With tooth and claw, while underneath a neem

The fair beast watched us bleed, thus fiercely wooed.

And I remember at the end she came

Snarling past this and that torn forest lord

Which I had conquered, and with fawning jaws

Licked my quick heaving flank and with me went

Into the wild with proud steps amorously.

The wheel of birth and death turns low and high.”

And this is Mr. Arnold's Saviour of the World, the Teacher of Nirvâna and the Law, that it is the fashion to go into raptures over—a confessed beast-lover who sings mere capricious brute selection instead of that lofty Christian virtue, that all-absorbing passion for one immortal soul which excludes all others from its silent depths, which knows no intermission and no change of flow, and which for those who recognize the spiritual side of marriage continues through eternity. Christianity takes the high ground that those who enter into the marriage relation from other motives than such sublimed love infract God's seventh command ; and in taking this ground, it makes of love between the sexes a rational and spiritual susceptibility, in striking contrast to the animal passion of the Buddhist, passed from birds to beasts, and from beasts to men and women, through eons of transmigration.

And another view, no less repulsive to intellectuality, is that of the Buddh throwing himself under the paw of a hungry tigress to make a meal for her cubs, as an act of merit-bearing renunciation. How distinctive the teaching of Christianity here ! For a good man one would hardly dare to give his life ; and where stands he who throws it away on brutes and vermin ?

Buddha's mission, according to this modern exposition of the faith, was "to seek deliverance and that unknown Light." Christ's is to offer deliverance and shine as the Light of the World. Buddha is a seeker after the truth. Christ is the Truth. "And where my quest will end," says the all-uncertain Buddha, "I know not." Christ knew his end, and ever proclaimed it to be the cross! Buddha laid out an endless road to Heaven, by way of Hell. Christ opened a direct highway to his Kingdom through a service which he especially declared not to be grievous. If you will read the "Light of Asia," thoughtfully through, and afterward one of the Gospels, I feel confident that you will arise from your study impressed, as was I, with this conviction: Buddha says and does everything as a man; Christ, as Almighty God.

The essential note of the theology, if it may be called a theology, is true to the spirit of Buddhism: *There is no hope for man only in man.* There is no Father, as proclaimed by Jesus, who in his human nature did nothing of himself. Every man is his own Saviour. Your modern Buddhist neither acknowledges nor expects anything from divine power. A personal God he regards as a gigantic shadow

thrown upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men. Says the editor of Olcott's "A Buddhist Catechism :—" "O ye of little faith, crouching beneath a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space, know that there are as many gods—no more, no fewer, as there are human beings who have ever conceived an idea of Deity."

So the tables are reversed and man has become the creator of the gods. Later Asiatic Buddhists, longing for a concrete object of worship, made Buddha a god. American Buddhists regard him as a saviour having equal claims with Christ,—“An all-seeing, all-wise counselor ; one who discovered the safe path and pointed it out ; one who showed the cause of, and the only cure for, human suffering. In pointing to the road, in showing us how to escape dangers, he became our guide. And as one leading a blind man across a narrow bridge over a swift and deep stream saves his life, so in showing us, who were blind from ignorance, the way to salvation, Buddha may well be called our saviour.” These are the words of an American gentleman, extracted from a so-called Buddhist catechism that is circulated by the thousand copies among a mass of persons as ignorant of what

Buddhism and Christianity really are as they are eager to dethrone the Son of God.

The Buddhism which is influencing Western thought is largely counterfeit, consisting in the main of an altruistic philosophy noticeably inferior to that of Christ's, though liberally borrowed from it. No intelligent Westerner who understands Buddhistic principles could for a moment consistently embrace them. He would have to begin by renouncing the world with its responsibilities and pleasures, by severing all ties of family and friendship, and by adopting a life of meditation and absolute inaction. For the thorough-paced Buddhist believes that actions, good or bad, are the direct cause of those repetitions of life he so much dreads; of the ghastly immortality of transmigrations and measureless woe. His object is thus to cut short the rotation of the kaleidoscope and find an opiate for desire, the source of human misery, in the suppression of action and the obliteration of personality. Life is not worth the living to a sincere follower of Buddha, the greatest of pessimists.

Inaction must certainly antagonize all that is altruistic in Buddhism. An exuberant love will not brook confinement behind the selfish

pales of contemplation and mystic ecstasy. These are perversions, spiritual abortions. Genuine love must act, and act with judgment. And to love one's neighbor means more than to serve him, to make his interests our own. It is to love in others, even the mean-spirited, the uncharitable, the evildoers, that which is eternal; that which is best and purest in man and hence is reflected from God. The consistent Christian lives as if he always so loved. But a faith which contemplates ultimate soul-swoon has in it no place for such an affection.

Jesus Christ assures us of what has been called "an immortality of ever intensifying consciousness, involving not merely rest and freedom from pain but also infinite activity (free and self-consistent as well) bringing the richest, deepest, most positive enjoyment." * In the heaven of Jesus, we retain our identity as fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. In the future state of Christianity, where the separated soul, beautified by death, becomes immediately conscious, there will be growth in strength, progress in intellectual discernment and power; in susceptibility to Beauty, which is God, and

* Dr. Bryant's "Life, Death, and Immortality."

growth in beauty itself—the beauty of the divine image. In the heaven of Jesus, we come to our own again, our own who for reasons we cannot penetrate and dare not question have been removed from our sight and laid beneath the myrtle. It is the Hereafter where we know what he does now; where the cause of his action is clearly discerned and is satisfying to the soul; where we learn that our disappointments are the appointments of a God who inflicts suffering because he loves; where we apprehend that the idolized son, the affectionate daughter, the father who is the support of the family, are taken because they are ripe for heaven, ready to be graduated from an inadequate training school here with an admittatur to the University of Eternity, better adapted to their needs and capacities; because, perhaps, they have service to perform for their Master there and can no longer be spared; because—who knows?—they are too frail to withstand the storms that are gathering about them on earth; to save them, it may be, from temptations they could not have resisted, from mental or bodily anguish that would have crushed the soul. Our finite minds may not fathom the purposes of the Infinite, nor

safely attempt to limit the Limitless. If it be true that in that future life the soul progresses, refines, perfects—bereaved mother, you have everything to look forward to in your reunion with the child who was taken before his intellect was matured, before the life so full of promise had time to blossom; every improvement to expect in the character that here was so prone to err, so impatient, so rebellious, yet withal so impressible and loving. In the heaven of Jesus, we come to our own again; our own purified, and elevated, and God-taught; made up into jewels of separate beauty by the divine Lapidary; not grains of gold fused in an unwrought ingot, their individuality forever lost. Which of these states of salvation appeals with greater force to the emotions and the reason of man?

Modern creed-mongers and apostles of ethical culture, who fain would contribute their puny modicum to the accumulated mass of force antagonistic to Christianity, are fond of asserting that our faith is but a reflection of the more ancient Buddhism which they style the Christianity of the East; that Jesus unscrupulously plagiarized from the Tripitaka; that the biography of Christ as contained in the Gospels is merely a clever copy

of the history of Buddha and of the libidinous Hindu god Krishna. And infidel writers of England and the Continent are in the habit of coupling Buddhism and Christianity as sister religions, the daughters of a common mother.

The theory that Christianity is a distorted photograph of Buddhism has been honey-combed by modern scholarship. It is inconceivable that such plagiarism, did it exist, should have been undetected by highly educated, sharp-witted Pharisees who were on the look-out for damning evidence; by Celsus, the ancient exponent of the plagiarism theory; by Porphyry, who proved, to his own satisfaction at least, that Pythagoras was the prototype of Christ. The borrowing was all the other way. Christianity is the worst of solvents; Buddhism is as absorbent as a sponge. Intent only on proving that Jesus was the Messiah of the Old Testament, and always planting the Cross of Golgotha in the foreground of their theology, the early Christian fathers repelled the aggressive attacks of Gnosticism (the doctrine that knowledge, not faith, is the way to Heaven); of Neo-Platonism (which proclaimed the emission of all things from a

supra-essential One, the emanation of matter from the soul, and the way of return to God through virtuous deeds and philosophic contemplation); and of Manichæism (a mixture of Gnosticism, Persian Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism—with its old story of duality, and its ascetic teachings with their anomalous outcome of profligacy of life). Christianity is as intolerant as truth itself, the most intolerant of conceivable realities. Christianity knows no accommodation, no compromise. It disclaims all kinship with other faiths. Wherever accepted, it forces aside its predecessor, and establishes the exclusive worship of one sole Deity, who it declares is a Personal Spirit. And as it extends, it educates, because its genius can be understood only by intelligent people. Buddhism, on the contrary, has shown itself always ready to amalgamate with other faiths, no matter how corrupt. By its contact with Christianity, its original atheism became modified into theism; and as early as the seventh century A. D. it had adopted a trinity, an adroit counterfeit of the Tripersonal God.

It is by reason of this assimilative tendency that Buddhism lacks definition, that no meaning can be extracted from its jungle

of contradictions—which fact leads the fool of the nineteenth century to conclude that therefore they must be full of significance. The confused pictures made by its lenses have for centuries delighted the muddled Asiatic mind. They are equally pleasing to his. There is so much aberration (much of it chromatic) that one never knows when he is within and when without the focus of exact belief. One's creed takes shape from one's desires. Hence the secret of the bloodless conquest of easy-going Asia. Hence a special cause of the popularity of Buddhism in Europe and America—the wide latitude it permits in the line of belief and practice. In contrast to its vagueness, the great truths of Christianity have such clearly chiseled outlines that they must be accepted for what they are, and not for anything the worldly convert may wish them to be.

The assertion that Christianity and Buddhism are sister faiths because they appear to have a common ethical basis, is a monstrous presumption on American credulity or ignorance. The points of dissimilarity so far outnumber the casual features of resemblance as to preclude the possibility of a common parentage. One religion is the antipode of

the other. There are no true parallels. Let me conclude by asking your attention to the following irreconcilable differences between the religion of Buddha and that of Jesus.

Buddhism teaches the doctrine of Karma (the Doing), that a man is eternally bound by the consequences of his own deeds. His record must be faced; his score must be settled somehow. What we call the soul is indeed blotted out. "With us, soul is commonly said of the spiritual, and consequently imperishable and changeless, principle of the human constitution; *i. e.*, spirit, in the proper sense. With the Buddhist, soul is that semi-material and changeful part of man which enters into his present constitution, and may survive the dissolution of the physical frame, but is not thereby become immortal. It is Plato's psyche or Paul's spiritual body; the ghost of exoteric religions; the perispirit of French psychists; the astral form or biogen body of spiritism and theosophy. The soul sooner or later perishes like the physical body."* It is Karma that survives; the aggregate of merits and demerits that controls the destiny of the sentient being,—

* Olcott's "A Buddhist Catechism."

“The Karma—all that total of a soul
Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,
The ‘self’ it wove, with woof of viewless time,
Crossed on the warp invisible of acts.”

In this doctrine of Karma is involved the mystery (inexplicable even to the Buddhist) of the transfer of responsibility for sin from one transmigrating person to another. An infant comes into the world oppressed with the intolerable burden of some other human being's sinfulness. Acts determine the character of descendants. “Our acts, therefore, live in their effects or subsequent forms. Until we can remove all material desires from our acts, they will always necessitate material effects and produce reincarnations. . . . Attention is to be drawn to the fact that this law offers a satisfactory explanation of the apparent injustices of life. We find around us not only pain and suffering, but also moral excellence and depravity, forced upon individuals by circumstances over which they seem to have no control.” *

Buddhism knows no forgiveness of sins; its only hope lies in a higher birth. Christianity promises perfect deliverance from the spiritual results of transgression, free pardon for all sins save one—the ascrib-

* Olcott's “A Buddhist Catechism.”

ing of the miracles of Christ to Satanic agency (aspersion of the Holy Ghost).

Buddhism is an incongruous miscellany of humanitarian and agnostic elements, which has notoriously failed to improve moral conditions because there is no spiritual energy behind its ethical utterances. And herein lies the gist of contrast between this religion and Christianity, rather than in the letter of their respective precepts. Christianity unreservedly pronounces that the energy which prompts its adherents to action, which lights an ethereal fire in the soul, is the power of the Holy Spirit. Buddhism, on the contrary, exhorts: "Be righteous by your own power. Be your own Inspirer, your own Comforter, your own Christ. Expect no help from a supernatural source."

Buddhism bids men get rid of all notion of self, *ego*, personal identity, and manufacture a mass of personal merit with a view to a better birth hereafter and ultimate self-abolition in Para-Nirvâna. Christianity bids men get rid of selfishness, and so make themselves reasonably fit for life in heaven in the presence of eternal beauty and goodness and truth. The Christian is asking, What shall I do to gain this future?

The Buddhist, What shall I do to blot it out?

Christianity, regarding withdrawal to a re-cluse life as a crime against society, urges men to labor. Buddhism constrains them to abstain from action, and pass their lives in apathy and melancholia. Christianity puts its soldiers into the field and arrays them against spiritual foes. Buddhism locks its votaries in a castle on some dreamy Morro, and cautions them to evade the battle.

Christianity teaches that love perdures; Buddhism, that it is to be extinguished by absorption in a loveless and unlovely Brahm, of whom Browning wrote that "a loving worm within its clod were diviner."

Buddhism belittles the sacredness of home life, and laughs to scorn the exalted joys of the married state. It favors monkhood, and enjoins entrance into a monastic communism. Buddha was a hater of woman, a selfish deserter of wife and child; and to-day, any Buddhist who desires to make trial of a new mistress has only to enter a retreat and remain celibate for a month. He thus secures a legal separation from all female companions, and the right to marry any woman he may select. For Buddhist women, eighteen hells

are especially prepared ; but if they live virtuously through fifteen hundred reincarnations, they may be born once more as infant boys, and thus have a chance to attain Nirvâna.

Christ was a friend of woman. He regarded and treated her as the equal of man, and was thus the first to proclaim her emancipation. None other has ever been so considerate of the sensitive nature of woman as Jesus Christ ; none other has shown such a knowledge and appreciation of the depth of her affection. None other ever spoke so reassuringly to faltering woman. None other ever so richly rewarded the faith of confiding woman. None other has ever been so forgiving to fallen woman. None ever built such safeguards about the chastity of woman, or spoke in such scorching denunciation of assault upon her purity. None other has made marriage so holy and indissoluble a union. None other used it to typify the divine relation to the Church, the Bride of God. None but Jesus ever spoke to woman, even to his earthly mother, as the Almighty from his throne. What wonder that woman was the last to wet his cross with her tears, the first to peer into the vacant sepulcher !

Finally, Buddhism is the child of superstition, and thrives only where the light of science cannot penetrate. It knows no growth, no progress. It is nepenthes to the spirit of advancement. It is stagnation incarnate. Its Para-Nirvâna appropriates, and in appropriating palsies, the thinking energies of its devotees, who have no conception whatever of a spiritual side to life. It has produced no brilliant types of manhood, evolved no heroes, upbuilt no states. Christianity strikes an essentially different and incomparably higher note in its recognition of the spiritual nature of man and thus of the true oneness of the human and the divine nature, man in God's image. Those who profess Christianity afford the strongest evidence that its innermost spirit is the spirit of aspiration and achievement. Argue as you may in support of the basal teachings of other religions, Christianity alone has meant for man a loftier realization of truth and a nobler conception of duty. Christianity alone has carried the soul to the summits of its being.

Christianity is the religion of reason ; and as such it embodies the spirit of inductive philosophical method, regarding appreciable

facts as the utterances of eternal science and interpreting science, the universal law of God, through the facts as he discovers them. In the light of the facts revealed, while clearly apprehending the unity, personality, and unerring justice of God, man has recognized himself as the miracle of miracles; has learned to know himself in his three-fold nature, animal, rational, spiritual; and to set a value on himself as possessed of special aptitude for a higher than mere terrestrial life.

Buddhism (to sum up its doctrines as presented in the Olcott catechism, which has the indorsement of native high priests), teaches the highest goodness without a God; a continued existence without what goes by the name of soul; a happiness without an objective heaven; a method of salvation without a vicarious Saviour; a redemption by one's self as the Redeemer; and a *summum bonum* attainable in life this side of Nirvâna.

It is plain that one cannot, as swâmis are urging on the lecture platforms of Greater New York to-day, serve both Christ and Buddha. Shall it then be the flickering reflected Light of Asia or the Eternal Self-luminous Sun of the World?

What is Christianity More than Confucianism, the Ethical System of China?

(Excellent wisdom is found in thee. Dan. v. 14.)

IN the number of its adherents, Confucianism, the native faith of China, stands second to Christianity among the world's great religions. There are more Christians to-day than believers in any other one creed. Hinduism is the third religion in the scale of numerical comparison, Buddhism the fourth, and Muhammadanism the fifth. In view of its position as numerical second among the faiths of the earth, as well as by reason of its claim to have laid the foundations of the most permanent socio-political system the world has ever known, Confucianism assumes an importance somewhat out of proportion to any menace it may be in itself to Western religious thought. Supplement this with the fact that China is well embarked in that career of colonizing conquest which Napoleon predicted would some day move the world, and interest becomes intensified in her positivism as a working system; in the causes of her arrested development; in her ethics, which explains

and enforces the obligations of the Five Human Relationships of prince and minister, parent and child, husband and wife, elder and younger, friend and friend, and, secondly, of the Five Cardinal Virtues of benevolence, righteousness, filial piety, ceremony, and faithfulness; in her claim to teach the universal brotherhood of men by her insistence upon the negative form of the Golden Rule (What you do not like when done to yourself, do not to others); and in her conception of a Supreme Being.

China prides herself upon her antiquity, and her literature carries us back to the remotest past. For all that remains of her ancient letters, the so-called Sacred Books, we are indebted to the editorial pen of her philosopher Kung, or Confucius, the beloved teacher, who stands out in bold relief as the most distinguished personage in her history. Born in an evil age (551 B. C.), when corruption had sapped the foundations of government, and misrule and violence were everywhere rife, Confucius early dedicated himself to the cause of social and political reform.

Tradition relates that in his youth he was of so impatient a temper that he could not endure the drudgery of learning, and decided to give

up literary pursuits for some manual employment. One day, as he was returning home with a full determination to go to school no longer, he happened to pass a half-witted old woman who was rubbing a bar of iron on a whetstone. Asking the reason of this strange proceeding, he learned from her that she had lost her knitting-needle and was endeavoring to make another by rubbing down the bar. Her words acted with magical force upon the young philosopher. "If a half-witted old woman," he said to himself, "has resolution enough to rub down a bar of iron into a needle, it would be unworthy of me to display less perseverance when the highest honors of the Empire are within my reach." Inspired with new vigor he returned to his books, and in his twenty-second year entered upon his labors as a public teacher, opening his house as a school for all who wished to learn the doctrines of antiquity. His merits were recognized; political positions were conferred upon him; and at last, as minister of crime, we find him making heroic efforts for the betterment of social conditions. But then, as now, reformers were unpopular, and the neglect of his sovereign led to his retirement. For thirteen years Confucius wan-

dered from state to state, disseminating his precepts among the fifteen millions who constituted the population of what was then China. In all this work, the sage claimed to be only "a transmitter" believing in and loving the ancients, not an original thinker. He died at seventy-three, a disappointed man because no monarch had appeared to make a fair trial of his theory of government.

Yet after his death his influence was destined far to exceed his most sanguine expectations. It has been greater than that of any other human teacher. No other has ever spoken to so many millions or received such honors from posterity. For more than twenty centuries, the moral axioms of Confucius have been taught in the schools of China; educated persons repeat verbatim page after page from his classical books; and scores of his precepts are familiar to the masses, who have positively no other moral law to guide them.

Confucius disclaimed divine inspiration; he made no change in the ancient religion. The aboriginal monotheism is occasionally reflected in his sayings, but the Almighty was "the Unknown God" between whom and humanity the philosopher descried no re-

lationship. The study of man should suffice for man. The existence of the soul after death, he admitted ; but as to the nature of immortality, he was silent. "While you do not know life," he said to an inquiring disciple, "what can you know about death ?" He never suspected that the true reward is not of this world. Thus no impulse was given to religious thought, and the craving of the human soul for certainty as to its future remained unsatisfied. Confucius tactfully evaded the question of post-mortem consciousness : "Were I to say that the departed are possessed of consciousness, pious sons might dissipate fortunes in festivals of the dead ; and were I to deny their consciousness, heartless sons might leave their fathers unburied."

The aim of Confucius was to inculcate lofty principles of conduct for the government of men in their relations to one another and to the ruling powers. The whole duty of man was comprised in the performance of obligations connected with the Five Relationships. Filial piety, fraternal submission, and veneration for the men and institutions of ancient days, were the foundations of all virtuous practices. His golden rule (the sole original thought of Confucius) "What you

do not like when done to yourself, do not to others," expressed in written language by a single picture letter, was the one word (Reciprocity) he specially commended as embodying the sum and substance of duty.

The philosophical writings of Confucius are preserved in the form of sayings called *Analects*; in books entitled the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*; and in the works of Mencius, a disciple and expounder of the sage. The Confucian *Analects* shine among the laconics of the world.

By way of example:—

"The Master said: 'In the Book of Poetry are three hundred pieces, but the design of all may be embraced in one sentence—Have no depraved thoughts.

"Those who know the truth are not equal to those who love it.

"Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.

"Good government obtains when those who are near are made happy and those who are far off are attracted.

"Three friendships are advantageous: friendship with the upright, friendship with the sincere, and friendship with the man of observation. Three are injurious: friendship with the man of specious airs, friendship with the insinuatingly soft, and friendship with the glib-tongued. Have no friends not equal to yourself.

"Fine words and an ingratiating appearance are seldom associated with true virtue.

"Shall I teach you what knowledge is? When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to confess your ignorance—is knowledge.

“With coarse rice to eat, water to drink, and my bended arm for a pillow—I have still happiness even with these; but riches and honors acquired by unrighteousness are to me as a floating cloud.

“What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others. The superior man thinks of virtue; the small man thinks of favors which he may receive. The superior man is catholic; the small man is partisan.”

In the Great Learning, based on the teachings of Confucius, it is insisted that the welfare of the people should be the single aim; and the divine right of kings to rule except in accordance with the principles of justice and virtue, is denied.

“The ancients who wished to establish illustrious virtue throughout the empire,” says the Great Learning, “first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts.

“From the loving example of one family, a whole state becomes loving; and from its courtesies, the whole state becomes courteous: while from the ambition and perverseness of one man, the whole state may be led to rebellious disorder. Such is the nature of influence.

“It is not possible for one to teach others while he cannot teach his own family. *There* is filial piety, there is fraternal submission, there is kindness. Therefore the ruler, without going beyond his family, completes the lessons for the state.

“What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in inferiors, let him not display in the service of his superiors. What he hates in those who are before him, let him not therewith precede those who are behind him. What he is unwilling to

receive on the right, let him not bestow on the left. This is what is called 'The principle with which, as with a measuring-square, to regulate one's conduct.'"

Mencius lived in a degenerate age, but without fear or favor threw himself into the arena to wrestle with wickedness. Purification of heart was his remedy for evil; the sinlessness of childhood, his standard of moral purity. "The great man," said Mencius, "is he who does not lose his child's heart." Your attention is asked especially to this saying: "The noblest thing in the world is the people. To them the spirits of the earth and the fruits of the earth are inferior. The prince is least important of all."

It will be seen that one prevailing spirit breathes through the books of the Chinese, a spirit of conservatism. China is guided by an ideal constructed for her by Confucius. Of this ideal she has never lost sight, and it has kept her vast civilization homogeneous and held her states together through thousands of years. But her light has been derived entirely from the earth, and in this fact we must seek the explanation of her arrested development. She has been without a vital principle of growth; without that spirit of progress which has carried our Western

civilization transcendently beyond the limit reached centuries ago by China—reached in letters, reached in fine art, reached in applied science, reached in altruism, reached in statesmanship! There has been quantity without quality. Beauty? Yes, of a certain pattern, in the exquisite forms in porcelain, in the products of the loom, in the creations of the brush; but beauty lacking something—counterfeit beauty that fails to thrill the soul, to raise the mind above the sphere of the gross and sensuous and fix it on types that stand forever as inspirations to high resolve and noble endeavor. And nowhere is the evidence of this more marked than in what is called Chinese poetry—poetry without inspiration, invention, insight—odes, idyls, mere didactic verse from which the mind can draw no fire; which do not awaken to the divine side of things, nor to the nobility that slumbers in human souls.

Poetry is transfiguration, the transfiguration of life. The poet remakes the universe, and beautiful indeed are the forms of nature when transfigured by his God-given power. As certain vibrations of ether, impinging on terrestrial matter, have been transformed into heat energy which has become fixed and tan-

gible in the diamond crystals of the Kimberley peridotite, so the aspects and semblances of common things that fall continuously on the soul of the poet are transfigured by his genius, and materialize as so transfigured, through an energy intangible, unintelligible, divine, in those jewels of verse

“That on the stretcht fore-finger of all time
Sparkle forever.”

Thank God that man is gifted with this power of transfiguration!—for it is this seeing the Divinity in common things that is the most potent instrumentality in keeping alive in the heart of man a true love for his Maker. It is this faculty of transfiguration which, in the providence of God, has been ordained to save the world from materialism, positivism, indifferentism. Poetry is beauty plus spirituality; and its aim is to keep open the path that leads from the corporeal to the incorporeal, from the seen to the unseen. It is thus a witness-bearer for God. The fact that there is poetry is evidence in itself of the existence of a Being spiritual, personal, supernatural. The message of Christ and that of true poetry are in harmony.

There is no poetry in China, no suggestion by man's imagination, in musical words, of

noble grounds for the noblest emotions, because there is no high spiritual life. Beauty is a mere empty form. Until the home-keeping hearts of a nation and the very school-children—by whose breath a Talmudic writer declared the world may be saved—live in the earnestness that springs from a union of beauty and spirituality, that nation must remain in some degree barbarian in its instincts. In China, beauty and spirituality are divorced. The standards of desire, the objects of aim, the stimuli to action, are therefore the opposite of high and true. There is no love of truth for truth's sake.

The Supreme God of the ancient Chinese hymns, the powerful and righteous ruler of the universe (Shang Ti), has disappeared from the national apprehension, and the idealism of the remoter past took its flight with monotheism. The Chinaman's spiritual nature has become stunted in its development, that part of him which should inspire to all higher achievements. The descent from primitive monotheism in ancient China stimulated the development of two great national practices: a formal organized worship of God on certain state occasions by the Emperor alone in behalf of the masses,

and a worship of ancestors by the common people severally. These two institutions have combined to warp the Chinese into the matter-of-fact, unideal, backward-looking beings we know them to be. "In the removal from their consciousness of the idea of personal relations to God, we recognize the withdrawal of that power which under the Christian religion exerts a perpetual attraction into a higher realm. And in the worship of ancestors we have a well-worn channel for the continual drawing off of religious energy. Ancestor worship has been uniformly represented by those who have made a study of the underlying motives of the Chinese as the immovable thing at the bottom of all their immobility. It is the one thing that characterizes all the Chinese."* Tablets, bearing the name of the departed ancestor, the hour of his birth and that of his decease, are worshiped twice a month with tapers and incense. Death is believed to liberate three spirits from the body of flesh; one occupies the grave, another seeks the invisible world, the third takes up its habitation in the memorial tablet. This ancestor worship envelops in gloom every Chinese household, and

* The Rev. F. H. Johnson in "Positivism as a Working System."

assures the permanent rule of the sceptered dead.

The Rev. F. H. Johnson, of Andover, called attention in 1883 to the positivism of the Confucian religion, an oriental prototype of the social system of Auguste Comte, which deals only with positives, excluding from philosophy everything but natural phenomena or properties of knowable things, and which deprecates and discourages all inquiry into causes as useless and unprofitable. "Out of the conception that the material prosperity of the people occupied the highest place in the mind of God," he says, "that Shang Ti saw with the people's eyes, that the wants of the people were the revelation of his will—grew as naturally as a widespreading tree may grow from a tender shoot, the system that makes the central idea of existence, the supreme object of devotion to be the 'collective good of the collective life.' The very same idea, in fact, that at the epoch of the French Revolution was made prominent in Europe, and subsequently flowered into the elaborate social system of Comte, developed in China more than four thousand years ago that idea of the state which is its exact counterpart. And as the elevation of this idea to

the supreme importance usurps the place of God in the modern system, so in China it quietly and gradually pushed the thought of God farther and farther into the distance. As the emperor existed for the good of the collective life, or state, so also Shang Ti, one step higher in the grade of being, existed for the same purpose. And if the physical and social well-being of the human race was the one idea that absorbed the mind of God, it should be the absorbing idea of every individual man who would be in harmony with the ways of heaven. We have already seen with what boldness Mencius laid down the doctrine that the people are the most important element in the state, the spirits of the land and grain the next, the emperor the least. The same course of reasoning was unconsciously carried out to include the Ruler of Heaven also, as one who, in the highest capacity of all, served, and was therefore subordinate to, the idea of the state." Thus the state becomes the God Supreme in the Chinese idea. Confucius was virtually a nationalist.

Christianity antagonizes this phase of positivism (to continue the quotation) by "its individualizing of man. There is no loss of

power, as in the worship of the ideal of the state, by the conception of divided opportunity and divided responsibility. Christianity points out a goal to be labored for, not by the human race in its corporate capacity, but one which is to be gained or lost by individuals. The destiny of each man, in one view, stands by itself. The opportunities of life cannot be taken from me by the failure of my neighbor to appreciate them. They cannot be made fruitful to me by the combined earnestness of all the other members of the community in which I live. My will is the arbiter of my destiny. The prospect of infinite blessedness and never-ending development thus appeals to each individual, not as to a fractional part of the human race, but as if he stood alone with God in the universe. The Almighty has encompassed him behind and before, and laid his hand upon him."

The Christian conception of God involves a belief in an immanent Supreme Being, approachable in prayer by every human creature, no matter how humble, how sinful, and pledged to answer prayer—for spiritual blessings, absolutely ; for temporal blessings, contingently, that is, in harmony with the highest interests of the petitioner. The God of Chris-

tianity is near ; into his hands we commit all our interests ; to his loving care we commend our dear ones ; we ask him to appoint our lot as seemeth good to his wisdom and love ; we trust his Holy Spirit to preserve us from our own evil hearts, from such combinations of passion and allurements as we cannot, by reason of the frailty of our nature, resist. We look to him for a higher state of blessedness beyond the grave. The eye of the Christian is fixed on a future where he has faith that great and unsearchable things will be unfolded. Christianity is a religion full of aspirations, characterized by an unquenchable thirst for more knowledge of God—the God whom Confucius may have known but certainly did not honor. Christianity adds faith in this God to faith in man. It repudiates the philosophy that would discard God and concentrate enthusiasm exclusively on humanity. It supplies a motive power that Chinese positivism cannot generate ; that cold morality, “with its stern laws and rigid formulas, its lofty aim and seemingly unapproachable ideals, must be invested with before it can bring the recalcitrant sinner under its wholesome and beneficent control—even the affectionate heart and the tender appeal of

religion."* The moral sense and the religious sentiment, distinct in origin, are, when present together, mutually sustaining, reciprocally active. It has been wisely said that "moral laws are but an expression of the necessities of human existence; and the general agreement of the ethical codes of the great nations of the past is due to the uniformity of the conditions of life on the globe." Thus all religions have a somewhat similar moral aspect; but it is far from true that they are sprung from a common universal system of ethics—that morals constitute religion, as certain culture-ridden moderns would have us believe—that the teachings of Christianity are but a reliquary of the ossified ethical postulates of dead saints clothed with no higher authority than Buddha, Confucius, or Seneca. After a life-long study of Chinese character, Dr. Legge reaches the conclusion that the highest attainments of the followers of Confucius in moral excellence are not to be compared with those made by docile learners in the school of Christ. It is not strange that the discriminating Mencius declared: "That whereby man differs from the brute is small, and the mass of men cast it away."

* President Hyde, in "Practical Idealism."

Confucianism, then, is a dreary agnostic system. It is without a concrete Christ to bring men into closer relationship with an almighty Creator and Father. The idea of a propitiatory sacrifice is repugnant to its philosophy; hence there are no proper priests in China. The Emperor acts as a minister of religion for the whole people, who take no part in the ceremonial. Christianity, on the contrary, accepts the expiatory offices of a single High Priest, the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice of himself once offered at Calvary—once and for all—is a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Hence Christianity, not ecclesiastical misinterpretations of it, knows no altar, no priesthood, no spiritual brokers who make deals for humanity on the floor of the Celestial Exchange. It unmistakably teaches that assumption of mediatorial prerogatives implies attempt at subtraction from the all-sufficiency of Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

Confucianism does nothing to promote neighbor-love. To be sure the earlier classics made reciprocity in practice the rule of life; but reciprocity has two sides. There may be mutual animosity as well as mutual

affection. "Recompense injury with justice," said Confucius, and "kindness with kindness." This is eye-for-eye and tooth-for-tooth doctrine, from which has been canceled the factor of forgiveness. To be sure it is writing kindnesses in marble, but not injuries in dust. The man who returns good for evil is looked upon in China as a coward; he does it from fear of personal injury. The Confucian system finds nothing reprehensible in revenge. Under the sway of its negative Golden Rule official tyranny thrives, frightful cruelty, suicide, infanticide, inhuman punishments that would put to the blush the tortures of the Spanish Inquisition. The Golden Rule in negative form has failed to ameliorate. Jesus gave positive character to the law of reciprocity: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." It is distinctively a Do, not a Don't; it is love rampant, not dormant.

And what has negative reciprocity done for woman in China? She is regarded as a necessary evil—men must have mothers. She has no rights the superior sex is under obligation to respect. Young maidens are daily sold into domestic servitude. Young women are trafficked in for immoral use.

Girls are bought to be trained for the stage by theater-managers who acquire with each unfortunate the power to put her to death. Children of fifteen are traded in marriage to rear generations in slavish submission to tyrannical husbands. Neither Confucius nor Mencius said or did anything looking to the improvement of the social position of women. The married life of the greater philosopher was unhappy. Led by her loose conduct to divorce his wife, he derived from his own personal experience an unfavorable impression of the marriage relation, and so speaks contemptuously of conjugal fidelity while giving his sanction to concubinage. The test of a good wife in China to-day is absence of jealousy on her part toward her husband's paramours.

Confucius lays down a law of chastity for wives, from which husbands are exempt. It was the white life for one. Christianity recognizes no such distinction, but imperatively demands a white life for two. It asserts the claim that human beings are to find superlative happiness in the domestic relationships; and that the man who is a party to the holy covenant of matrimony should be able to offer to the woman of his choice exactly what

he requires in her, a body and soul unsmirched with sexual impurity. This is high ground to take, but it is God's ground. Marriage based on any other principle, marriages contracted in order to secure worldly comforts and enjoyments, marriages that are entered into as mere legal or business partnerships, selfish and sensual marriage unions—all loveless, and obnoxious to the criticism of our Lord that in the resurrection they marry not in this way, as did the Sadducees of old—such marriages do not cement affections and make the consecrated homes to which angels may be believed fondly to stoop. The sanctuary of a pure and godly home is closed to the woman of China, who has no occasion to bless the national religion, the enforcer of her degradation.

Chinese women, again, have no right to fraternal consideration; have no mind of their own. Christian women are placed by the Founder of their faith on the same footing with men in all matters of right—domestic, social, political. And when Christendom itself shall have become Christianized, their voices will be heard and their opinions respected in the council chambers of every state.

Filial piety is the characteristic national virtue. Reverence for parents while alive, and a show of grief for them when dead, are organic duties of Confucianism. But the obligation is one-sided, not reciprocal as in Christianity. Parental government is tyrannous in the extreme. A father wields absolute power in his family, a mother-in-law exacts a galling service. The child must bend or break. Confucius went to too great lengths in his demands on filial piety, wholly indifferent to the fact that the obligation to serve father and mother involves reciprocal duties on the part of parents. Christianity emphasizes the principle that, whereas it is incumbent on the child to respect, honor, and obey within the limitations of conscience, it is binding on the parent to maintain his children properly, to educate them physically, intellectually, and morally, and to inculcate lessons of love. Christianity condemns all disqualification of father and mother for their high calling as character-formers by worldly vocations and avocations—by the follies of fashion, the exactions of business, the demands of club life. It denies to the heartless women who style themselves society's queens the right to squander in aimless indolence or

gratification of self the time that belongs to their offspring. It rebukes those self-seeking men who are so impatient of contact with sinlessness and innocence that they find it irksome to unbend to the little souls God has placed in their charge. And it pronounces the secret of that ideal training which makes a heaven of home to be the combination and cooperation of a manly, intelligent, unselfish, chivalric fatherhood and a gentle, self-denying, patient, dignified motherhood, in and through a Heaven-founded and Heaven-blessed unity.

Finally, the third element of Christianity most conspicuously lacking in Confucianism is Progress. With progress the religion of China has no sympathy. China was all the world to Confucius, who is largely responsible for the national exclusiveness of which the Great Wall is a symbol. There was nothing beyond that wall worthy of the attention and emulation of a Chinaman. The Museum of Confucianism has always been its own stenosed and insufficient heart. There is no spirit of upward and outward growth, described as "the spirit which is ever struggling to express and realize itself in higher forms, which promises to the human race far more

than it has ever yet accomplished, which leads men on with visions and hopes, which does not suffer them to be satisfied, but which makes them restless, daring, willing to risk all for the sake of an ideal good." This is the spirit of Christianity, the spirit that explains Western supremacy. But the people who are moral and nothing more, never expand, never climb out of the trench into which they have settled. They become crystallized according to some law of intellectual physics. For them, life does not broaden and deepen and intensify, eternity has no charms, heaven no reality. "Excellent wisdom" alone is inadequate.

China needs a religion that reveals the eternal God and presents the high ideals of Christianity to the boyish minds of its millions,—the superstition-dispersing gospel of Jesus Christ, whose thought of a Father God and a concrete Redeemer must bring peace and satisfaction to the souls that contemplate an impossible moral perfection. What Confucius left unfinished, Christianity is now called upon to complete. The heart of our nation warms to-day toward a race that has long been represented among us, a people that is becoming the national drudge, nay

more, that is aiding us to win our battles in the southern seas. Earnest men and women are endeavoring to make it easy for the children of the Celestial Empire to fall in love with Jesus Christ; for Chinese raw material, when shaped on Western looms and dyed with the pure tints of Christian doctrine, is second to none. Waked from the sleep of centuries, in a happy forgetfulness of its time-honored exclusive policy, the conservative race is asking for light, for education, social regeneration, soul-peace. God speed the efforts making in the world to-day to bring into the family of Christ the greatest nationality of the East!

What is Christianity More than Muhammadanism, the Monotheistic Religion of the Koran?

(Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Eph. i. 11. Woman is the glory [not the merchandise] of man. 1 Cor. xi. 7.)

AT the Parliament of Religions convened at the City of Chicago in 1893, reference was made to the progress of Islamism in the United States; and it is not to be frivolously passed over that the religion of Muhammad, divested of its wonted savagery and never so winsome and debonair, is at this very hour conducting an intellectual crusade among the nations that stripped it of its prestige in the holy wars of mediæval times. The drowning man is clutching at the traditional straw. Muhammadan missionaries are abroad, striving to convince the unenlightened and restless populations of central Europe, as well as the credulous elements of American society, that there is but one self-active mind in the universe and a single all-dominant Allah, or Will—thus striking at the primal psychological truths of soul-immortality and self-activity of human intellect, and

teaching submission to blind fate with the implied abdication of reason.

Many ill-balanced minds are appropriating the deftly cast baits and considering the advisability of "turning Turk;" so that earnest Christians would seem to be under obligation to fit themselves for effective combat with this subtle phase of what has been called "the new Enlightenment." It is my purpose this morning to discuss those characteristic features of El Islam that are irreconcilably opposed to the spirit and teachings of Christianity, and to inquire into the claim of this religion to represent a *bona fide* step in the spiritual evolution of man.

Arabia gave birth to the founder of El Islam, "the Saving Faith." Among some of the nomad tribes who made this peninsula their home, the rites and tenets of Judaism prevailed, though in a form more or less corrupted; others had become adherents of Christianity, first introduced into their country by the preaching of St. Paul, but at this time a mere caricature of the faith of the gospels. On the northeastern frontier, the fire-worship of the Persians had gained a foothold; but by far the greatest number adored as gods the heavenly bodies or

graven images erected to their honor in temples and groves.

In Mecca, the sacred city of the Arabs, was born, in the year 569, Muhammad, who by uniting his countrymen on the basis of a common faith laid the foundation of their greatness. In early life an humble merchant, as he approached middle age he became subject to attacks of melancholia, during which, he stated, the angel Gabriel appeared to him, communicated a new revelation, and commanded him to proclaim it to the world.

The principal points of this faith are found in the Koran (Recitation or Reading), which the pretended prophet gave to his countrymen and which they accepted as their sacred book, precipitated piece by piece from a Mother Bible in Heaven, and issued in fly-leaves by Muhammad. The Koran is made up of 114 Suras, or divisions; a mangle-mangle of rabbinical legends and biblical lore, with no claim to originality beyond the *modus inspirandi*. Perusal of it insures assent to Carlyle's characterization: "A wearisome, crude, confused jumble, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement; insupportable stupidity, in short!

Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran." Hunting for usable stuff among its chattocks is far from remunerative.

The Koran, however, clearly teaches that there is but one God, by whom divers prophets—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, the last and greatest of all—had been sent to instruct the human race. Christ, the son of Mary, is not God nor equal to God, only an apostle. To the assurance that every man has his appointed time to die, it adds a promise of eternal happiness to those who may perish in propagating the faith. Unbelievers are to suffer forever; but all "the faithful" will be cleansed from their sins, however great, by a longer or shorter period of punishment, and be finally admitted to a paradise of sensual pleasures. There they shall dwell in marble palaces, attired in silken robes, surrounded by fruits and flowers, and rivers of wine, and women of resplendent beauty.

Emanuel Deutsch defines Islam as Judaism adapted to Arabia, plus the apostleship of Jesus and Muhammad; and he bids us look for its source in the Talmud—not that Muhammad ever heard of this delightful

Jewish encyclopedia enlivened with parables, jests, and fairy stories, but that the Jews he knew, and on whose Judaism he founded Islam, were Talmudic in their forms of belief and social practices. No doubt, the influence of this Judaism was vastly stronger than that of the distorted or pseudo-Christi-anity of the Arabian tribes, which had degenerated into Mariolatry or hero worship, and whose professors Muhammad justly denounced as idolatrous.

A friend* who spent the past winter and spring in Muhammadan countries, and has been thrown into companionship with intelligent missionaries of quarter century service, brings back this answer to my query, "What is the best that Islamism has done, or is doing, for humanity?" I quote from her letter the statement of the Rev. Dr. Alexander, of the United Presbyterian Church of America, who is stationed at Assiout on the Nile: "Muhammadanism has brought the mind to a belief in the unity of God, and tried to disabuse it of a faith in idols; and it has in the past taken a stand for total abstinence, as the Koran positively prohibits the use of strong drink; but," he continued, "the tenets of the

* Miss Evelina S. Hamilton, of New York.

religion are a dead letter ; intemperance prevails and saint-worship is winked at. The whole system is on the decline, having no hold for good on the people, who in the rebound are lapsing into infidelity of the rankest kind." "The worst phase of Muhammadanism," Dr. Alexander said, "is its attitude toward woman. Polygamy is the rule. Any man in moderate circumstances may have four wives (the Sultan has a new wife every year). Divorce is allowable for the merest trifle ; and when a wife is thus put aside a new one is at once found to complete the allotted number. It is not uncommon for a man of thirty or thirty-five to have had forty wives. Women are uneducated ; and as they are often cast adrift, with no resources, life becomes to them an intolerable burden." "At Beyrout," my friend adds, "we dined with Professor Porter, who has been for twenty-five years connected with the American College in that city. Professor Porter declared that he could see no way in which Muhammadanism was of benefit to humanity, as the whole system was one stupendous falsehood from beginning to end. While in Damascus we attended service at the Irish mission with which Dr. Crawford, an Ameri-

can evangelist, has been associated for forty years. After service, I had a conversation with Dr. Crawford, who declared that the influence of Muhammadanism was everywhere demoralizing; that while it teaches a belief in one God, it fabricates so many lies about what this God requires of mankind that his commandments mean nothing; for the Koran as interpreted at present gives the greatest possible latitude to human depravity." The Rev. William Jessup, of Zahleh, who with his young wife has consecrated life to missionary work in Syria, confirmed these views, and in addition spoke of the intolerance of Muhammadanism, which exterminates other religions that oppose it, and crushes with oppressive measures those that seek to thrive beside it.

Islamism, then, in the opinion of those who have studied it most recently on its native soil, as well as in the experience of missionaries who have been in touch with it for a quarter century or more, has done nothing for humanity except to darken and deprave. The cause of this, as I apprehend it, lies: first, in its doctrine of fatalism; secondly, in its insistence on the chattelism of woman; and, thirdly, in its divorce of morality from religion.

Islam means submission to the will of Allah no matter how tyrannical, hopeless surrender to an eternally foreordained order of things. Muhammadans believe in Fate; Christians, in Providence. It has been asserted that Islam shares its fatalism with Christianity, "for creative omnipotence is but another name for fatalism." This is sophistry. It is true that predestination is taught in Scripture, notably in Romans viii., "For whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son." And in Ephesians i., God "hath chosen us . . . before the foundation of the world, . . . having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ." How is this to be interpreted? The seventeenth Article of Religion defines predestination to life as "the everlasting purpose of God, whereby he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind; and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation as vessels made to honor." The Greek pronoun *οἱς*, translated "whom," describes a body of believers considered collectively, and not severally as individuals. Such predestination takes not

away man's free agency and responsibility, which the Scriptures positively affirm. God foreordained from the beginning a great company of human souls to pass triumphantly through this life of probation, and thus be rendered fit for companionship with the Lamb through eternity, in place of the angels who fell by transgression. He has promised absolutely to give his grace to all who ask in a sincere desire for aid to join that company of the elect. All men may be saved, if they please, by faith in Jesus Christ, whose Church is charged with the sacred mission of commanding them everywhere to repent.

Calvin taught in his "Institutes" that God has decreed the future; that man falls according to appointment of divine providence, but always by his own fault. Beza, the successor of Calvin, dared to proclaim that "the Almighty created a portion of men to be his instruments with the intent of carrying out through them his evil designs." This is ultra doctrine. God has never played the rôle of tempter.

Christianity is antipodal to Muhammadanism in that its very essence is freedom, independence of compelling cause. It has always permitted and encouraged the freest exercise

of the intellect. A characteristic primitive fact of mind, to which every man's consciousness testifies, is that not only mind or spirit exists, preserving a conscious identity through all its changes and modifications, and hence is a single, indivisible, intelligent entity, capable of existence apart from this body; but that such mind, soul, self, spirit, or Ego, is essentially self-active—spontaneously (of itself) thinks, feels, and wills, and not through the agency or compulsion of some higher Mind or Over-Soul. And, what is more to the point, every Christian is repeatedly aware that he is acting in direct opposition to a divine Mind which is constraining him to follow some different course. Our God foreknows, but does not fore-compel. There is an unequivocal difference. It is inconceivable that the Almighty should legislate against murder, for instance, and then force a man to kill. Every mother in the land who has two children essentially differing in character relatively foreknows what each will do under the stress of passion and allurements. The one will be sure to yield, the other to resist. And yet this mother puts forth all the energies of her love to save the weaker child. She well fore-

knows but does not fore-compel. What is relative foreknowledge in the case of an earthly parent is absolute with God. Such is the teaching of Christianity.

Nature is spoken of by the scientist as a domain of rigid law, and man is the only child of nature that can comprehend that law. Because of this, his destiny is in his own hands, for he can direct and utilize the forces of nature. So argues the biologist. By analogy, man's spiritual destinies are within his control. Thank God it is so ordained; for nothing is more chilling to spiritual expansion than a belief in one unalterable destiny. "There are two ways of looking at God's will," said Drummond; "one at the love side of it, the other at the law; one ending in triumph, the other in despair; the one a liberty, the other a slavery." Without such liberty of the human will, which St. Paul taught equally with the absolute sovereignty of God, character-formation, ordered of God, were impossible.

Secondly, let us examine the influence of the Muhammadan religion on woman. Its whole spirit tends to oppress her sex. Her "little soul," as it is designated, seems hardly worthy of consideration. She is so degraded

that she has ceased to value herself. The women of the higher harams are a dejected, discontented set, with no object or employment in life ; and they who enter the seraglio of the Sultan leave hope behind them, for they know that the " Devil's Current " in the Bosphorus sweeps to a watery tomb all inmates who survive their charms.

Muhammad was an apostle of unbridled lust and dealt infamously with the gentler sex, regarding woman as the mere instrument of man's passion. He tempted his dupes to war by promising a distribution among them of maiden captives. He gave loose rein to the slave trade, that his followers might provide themselves through its channels with a miscellany of mistresses. He married seventeen wives himself, and was the owner of hundreds of odalisques. He excluded women from the mosques, and thus drew to the dregs the wine of moral life. His system cast a pestilent shadow over domestic happiness, and still is freighted with its loathsome fruit of wife-purchase and polygamy. Dr. Peters states in " Nippur " that, according to the Muhammadan idea, marriage is nothing more than a business transaction. The Arabs in the vicinity of

the excavations haggle over the price of a woman as if she were a mere commodity. Sixty dollars buys a wife of extra quality; forty dollars, a fair article at Nippur. The minimum price for a woman in the East is less than two dollars in our money. A wife so purchased is regarded as a chattel, the personal property of her husband, the defenseless victim of his lechery and truculence. Despite its appropriation of Talmudic adornments, Muhammadanism has overlooked one gem that glistens in the Talmud: "It is woman alone through whom the blessings of Heaven are vouchsafed to a house. Men should be careful lest they cause her to weep, for God counts her tears."

In contrast to the attitude of Muhammad is that of Christ. Everywhere in the Gospel story is woman treated by her Saviour as a social equal, as a companion worthy of his sympathy and entitled to his counsel, as a ministering angel in his daily walks and before his cross of agony, as a confidante and witness at the empty sepulcher. Jesus regarded woman as much an individual as man, as much a unit in Church and home and nation. He recognized in Martha of Bethany the anxious housewife who grandly

serves in all the duties and employments of home life; in Mary her sister, the spiritual side of womanhood, that rises from the earthly to the heavenly and is lost in contemplation of the Divine; in Mary Magdalene, the strength of womanly devotion, the trust that bridges the gulf of death; in Mary the Forgiveness, the depth of holy contrition. Woman in the Gospel system is made the equal of man in every question of privilege; endowed by her Maker with power to choose her own course of action, with a right to the same consideration as a social and intellectual unit, to the same educational advantages, to the same opportunities of making a livelihood, to the same compensation for equally good work. Where does God make any distinction between the obligations binding upon man and those incumbent upon woman? Is not the moral law uttered for the good and observance of both? Have the promises of this Bible any reference to differences of sex?

I say it reverently, if Jesus Christ had walked among men in this democratic age he would, I believe, have given more positive expression to a tenet that is deeply imbedded in his divine philosophy, even universal suf-

frage at the polls of the nations—suffrage that does not exclude superior intellect and taxed property interests from their right to representation in the legislative chamber simply because in the providence of God they happen to be the endowments of woman. Psychological science is here in accord with Christian teaching; for it demonstrates and importunes us to believe that each one of us, without regard to sex, is a self-conscious unit, capable of self-examination, self-criticism, self-consistency, cast in the image of the Mind Infinite, trammled by no limitation to its development, with no horizon to the evolution of its deathless powers.

Marriage with the Muhammadans is a civil act, dissoluble at the pleasure of the husband. A wife that cloy the appetite or taste may be divorced without the slightest disloyalty on her part and without the assignment of any reason by her husband, who has only to say in the presence of a third party, "I divorce you. Begone!" The dragoman of the party just referred to was an Egyptian Muhammadan who had divorced two wives. One was only fourteen years old when he married her; but her mother had a way of leaving the door ajar which was

annoying to him, so he divorced his young wife lest she should inherit the same trait. The second wife was accustomed to shed tears when he left home in the prosecution of his calling. Interpreting this as a sign of bad luck, he dissolved their marriage with the utmost *sang-froid*.

To the Muhammadan, conjugal love is an unknown quantity. He is utterly dead to the divine instinct which prompts an unreserved psychical as well as physical union of two intelligent beings of opposite sex, two complementary personalities who find in love the heart's blood of their mutual faith. There is no realization of Tennyson's beautiful thought:

“ Either sex alone

Is half itself, and in true marriage lies

Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfills

Defect in each, and always thought in thought,

Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,

The single, pure, and perfect animal,

The two-cell'd heart, beating with one full stroke

Life.”

In no system of religion, ethics, or philosophy is there a conception of the marriage relation approaching in nobility that of Jesus Christ. He looked upon marriage as vastly more than a mere animal living-together. With him, it is a union of bodies

and souls; a compact rational, moral, and grandly spiritual. There is not the slightest insinuation in his teachings of woman's inferiority to her husband.

And Christ's law makes marriage dissoluble for the one specific cause of proved unfaithfulness alone. There is in the Christian Church no "free divorce" which disunites married pairs because of incompatibility or failure to fulfill any of the obligations of marriage as interpreted by the state. Whatever may be the ruling of the civil law, the Church of Christ can never sanction the putting asunder of those whom God has joined, except for the one cause defined so precisely by its Founder. Bishops may indeed give permission for remarriage on the part of those divorced for causes other than adultery, but their notes of indulgence will be protested when presented on high. The only rational basis of marriage from the Christian outlook is affection, love in each party to the contract stronger than that entertained for any other human being. "For this cause," said Jesus (Matt. xix. 5), "shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall [literally] be glued to the woman of his choice [here Christ assumes that an engage-

ment is as sacred as a marriage], and the two shall be one flesh."

This spiritual side of marriage is hidden from the eyes of the Muhammadan husband, this love side of marriage is undreamed of by the Muhammadan wife—the love that springs in the heart of Christian woman; so disinterested, so ingenuous, so near when most forgotten, so wise, so steadfast. What man will say that he has ever been able to overdraw his account with this love, that his drafts have ever been dishonored? What man will claim his worthiness of such devotion, or urge his ability ever to requite it?

"The love of woman quivering to the blast
Through every nerve; yet rooted deep and fast
Midst life's dark sea."

This is the love that makes home sacred and motherhood beautiful. There is no man who is not susceptible to its influence, who cannot be saved from a downward career by the strength and affection of true womanhood. I am sure that if American woman, from her of the squalid tenement to her of the burnished mansion, would make home what God intended it should be, there would be no need of crusading against saloons, for the hearthstone would possess superior

attractions to the public bar ; there would be no demands for legislation to authorize the sale of alcoholic drinks in clubs and corner hells on the Sabbath ; there would be no such attempted insult of Him who spoke the word, alike to man and woman, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," as the offering of bills in our legislatures to legalize prostitution in the great cities of the United States ! Never, if the American mother would but prayerfully study her duty, and fearlessly and unremittingly discharge it !

Therefore I feel that all we can do to educate American women up to a sense of their responsibility, all we can do to fit them by college education coupled with Christian training (divorce one from the other, and your higher education but turns a girl into a selfish prig, estranges her affections from her parents, and teaches her that it is a mark of advancement to say, not in her heart, but openly and with a sneer at believers, "There is no God, and every man is his own Christ"), —therefore I say, all we can do to fit young women by college education coupled with religious training for their noble work as reformers of society must hasten the consummation we all devoutly hope and pray for.

Assuredly, when we come to think of it, the national force that has for generations been wasted in America is woman ; and we have cause for rejoicing that at the close of this nineteenth century, preeminently "woman's century," it has come to be recognized that no nation can be truly great in which the rights of woman are not upheld, and her refined intellect is not respected as a directing agency and an impelling power.

Finally, Christianity is, as we have seen, a moral as well as a rational religion. Confucianism, it will be remembered, exalts morality at the expense of religion. Muhammadanism plainly exalts religion at the expense of morality. There is about each of the latter systems a fatal dissymmetry. Both have in consequence antagonized progress ; both have failed to make good at the soul's depths. Muslims assume no moral obligations and simply live for the present, the Koran inculcating a belief in fate which destroys all concern for the future. And indeed, as Maeterlinck asks, can any true sentiment of the future ever come to the man who has not had his resting-place in some pure woman's heart ? Amid an environment of popular wrongdoing and political oppression, the votaries of El

Islam seek satisfaction in the thought of their religious superiority to other nations. It is as a Pasha said in the hearing of my friend Adams, the missionary, "True, we are great scoundrels in Turkey—but, thank God! we have the true faith."

In divorcing morality from religion Muhammadanism destroys that refined ethic sense which is the appropriate soil for the growth of spiritual sentiment. It reacts to congeal the conscience, presents immoral motives for conduct, and has naturally ended in formalism and moral paresis.

Christianity cherishes the spiritual aspect of human relationships, while Muhammadanism grovels in the carnal. The latter is a religion of self-gratification, the former a religion of self-sacrifice. War and sensuality shaped Arab destiny. El Islam blazed into savage frenzy which swept over Europe in a whirlwind of fire. The Koran teaches a religion of violence. The key of El Islam to men's hearts was the scimitar; the key of Christianity is the soft word that turneth away wrath and persuadeth to brotherly feeling and action. The spinal cord of the system of Muhammad was fanatical zeal; the impulse that flashed through its motor fibers

to the outer world incited the activities of fear. The scheme was cunningly devised to play upon the apprehensions and superstitions of men. The Koran encourages slavery, concubinage, and murder, as means of propagandism. The Bible accompanies the injunction to disseminate its faith with promises of future spiritual gratifications. The divine Paymaster of Christianity compensates in eternity.

There can be no greater contrast between Christianity and El Islam than that which marks the plans of the two religions for the reconciliation of man with God. The one—salvation through the atoning blood of Jesus—is declared to be the purpose from eternity of an all-wise, all-prescient, all-pitying Creator, immanent in the universe, accessible through Christ, identical in spiritual nature with man who is made in his image and hence is immortal, ever inviting the children of men to personal relationship with himself and preparing them for such relationship by the development of religious instincts in their souls.

The contra-God of El Islam is remote; sagacious and just, but out of reach, nebular; without love, with no scheme of atonement

for human sin as the chevisance of such love. Muhammad ridiculed the idea of Christ's sacrifice. It were unworthy of Allah, says the Koran, to have a child, to become incarnated in a son whose human life should be given for humanity. Hence the Muhammadan belief that it devolves on man himself to propitiate offended Deity ; hence the system of accumulating credit, of banking a surplus of merit in heaven by acts of hospitality, and the like, on earth. Muhammadanism, like Buddhism, virtually makes the individual man the author of his own salvation ; and in so doing it is vaunted to teach the inherent dignity and worth of human nature.

Be not deceived by the rose-colored pictures of El Islam drawn by chauvinistic self-seekers. We are not to judge of a faith by a few moral or psychical principles. Bosworth Smith appropriately said, in a famous speech : " The religion of Christ contains whole fields of morality and whole realms of thought which are all outside the religion of Muhammad. It opens to man's moral nature humility, purity of heart, forgiveness of injuries. Its ideal life is most elevating, most majestic, most inspiring."

Muhammadanism is putrid to the medulla.

It contains no element that makes for righteousness. Its influence on civilization has ever been withering. It aborts all tendencies to a higher culture. Its characteristic sequelæ are intellectual torpor complicated with moral anæsthesia. It cannot be Christianized. By no conceivable compromise can the two faiths, each an aspirant to the sway of the world, be merged in a common religion. Education alone will break the shackles of the Muslim; translation from his narrow sphere of bigotry, intolerance, and self-conceit to the broader, purer, grander, open-handed, free-hearted life of the outside world of progress and enlightenment. And the meridian of this schooling must be reached in his abandonment of the religion of sense and fate and his acceptance of the religion of reason as projected in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Man is man only through his control by this highest faculty of intellect.

“Man is not the prince of creatures
But in reason; fail that, he is worse
Than horse, or dog, or beast of wilderness.”

—*Nathaniel Field.*

What is Christianity More than Theosophy?

(Jesus saith : “ I stood in the midst of the world, and I found all men drunken ; and my soul grieveth over the sons of men because they are blind in their hearts.” Gospel according to the Egyptians, Third Logion.)

EXTRAORDINARY interest is manifesting to-day, not only among European nations but throughout our own country as well, in ancient Hindu mysticism. Minds in unstable equilibrium—the inquisitive and adventurous element that cultivates *séances*, exhibitions of thought-transference, and whatever is new or radical in philosophy, with a view to glean- ing some knowledge of the occult world or, as they say, of penetrating the true relationship of man to the universe—are easily fanned into flame by teachers of Mahatma- ism, Blavatskyism, and other strange phases of thought, who claim to be specially qualified or specially privileged to pry into the Divine nature.

While Western science is tending to materialism—a materialism that attributes all psychical phenomena (all shades of thinking, feeling, and willing) to enormously complicated forms of motion ; that characterizes

affection, faith, hope, fear, as only molecular changes in the gray matter of the brain, and reduces thought to phosphorus, thus justifying Carlyle's definition of it as a Philosophy of Dirt—while Western science has this trend, various antiquated superstitions are reviving not only in the purlieus but at the intellectual centers of Christendom,—magical and Eleusinian practices, alchemy, natural astrology advertising its ability to determine individual destinies from configurations of planets and stars, palmistry, the science of the divining-rod, professed intercourse with demons and with the dead. These and many others, dredged up from the mud of ancient spiritual crime and washed of their telltale stains, are being foisted on a receptive public as the novel results of recent scientific investigation.

“Unless we mistake the signs,” says the author* of “Isis Unveiled,” “the day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature and ancient science embraced all that can be known. An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin—nay, has already begun. The cycle

* Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

has almost run its course; and the future pages of history may contain full evidence, and convey full proof, that

‘ If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,
And told him secrets of the world unknown.’ ”

During the last few years, what is called Theosophy, or Theosophical Philosophy, “the Secret Doctrine,” has made startling headway, following in the wake of Spiritism and claiming to contain the essence of ancient Indic wisdom. It is practically Occultism, defined by A. P. Sinnett as “not merely an isolated discovery showing humanity to be possessed of certain powers over Nature, which the narrower study of Nature from the merely materialistic standpoint has failed to develop; it is an illumination cast over all previous spiritual speculation, of a kind which knits together apparently divergent systems. It is to spiritual philosophy much what Sanscrit was found to be to comparative philology; it is a common stock of philosophical roots. Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and the Egyptian theology, are thus brought into one family of ideas.” *

Modern Theosophy owes its origin to a

* “The Occult World.”

Russian adventuress, Madame Blavatsky, the professed messenger of its custodians, who, after devoting herself for more than thirty years to occult pursuits, came to New York in 1875 and there organized the Theosophical Society under the presidency of one Henry S. Olcott. The objects of the Society are set forth as follows :

I. To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color.

II. To study Aryan literature, religion, and science.

III. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature, and the latent powers of man.

Subsequently a fourth object of the society, the destruction of Christianity, was revealed. To quote Blavatsky : " Later it has determined to spread among the ' poor benighted heathen ' such evidences as to the practical results of Christianity as will at least give both sides of the story to the communities among which missionaries are at work. With this view it has established relations with societies and individuals throughout the East, to whom it furnishes authenticated reports of the ecclesiastical crimes and misdemeanors, schisms and heresies, controversies

and litigations, doctrinal differences and Biblical criticisms and revisions, with which the press of Christian Europe and America constantly teems. Christendom has been long and minutely informed of the degradation and brutishness into which Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Confucianism have plunged their deluded votaries, and many millions have been lavished upon foreign missions under such false representations. The Theosophical Society, seeing daily exemplifications of this very state of things as the sequence of Christian teaching and example—the latter especially—thought it simple justice to make the facts known in Palestine, India, Ceylon, Cashmere, Tartary, Thibet, China, and Japan, in all which countries it has influential correspondents.” The malevolence here is unmistakable.

The Theosophical Society now numbers some five thousand members in Europe, Asia, and the United States—as a rule imperfectly educated, marvel-mongering charlatans. It supports scores of magazines in various languages, and representative “branches” to disseminate its blasphemous teachings in all corners of the globe.

Blavatsky professed to have received her

revelations from a brotherhood of sages called Mahatmas, resident in an oasis of the Desert of Gobi, who informed her that the advances of modern science, and especially the spread of evolutionary philosophy, had at last fitted the world for the reception of their profound teachings. So she was deputed to act as an intermediary between the outside public and the masters immersed in philosophic meditation—and so etherealized by their melancholic stupor as to be unable to endure contact with coarse human nature. In league with this impostor were Monsieur and Madame Coulomb, who accompanied her to India and were installed as managers of her nefarious business at Madras. Money extorted from rich dupes was expended to equip a house with all the paraphernalia of deception; and every artifice was enlisted to propagate the new philosophy. The accommodating Mahatmas were untiring in their miracle exhibitions. Although two thousand miles distant, by mere effort of will they could “precipitate” an astral letter into a cabinet or project an astral personality into the reception-room. Flowers dropped from nowhere into the awe-struck circle, unseen bells jingled, and the usual phenomena of the

spiritistic *séance* were now induced through the marvelous psychic powers of the Mahatmas. Spiritism, appealing to the low and grossly ignorant masses, had fallen into disrepute. Theosophy, with this attractive garniture of the supernatural, pressed its claims on a more cultured class, and under the dignified name of Esoteric Buddhism now affects an intent to enlighten the benighted West. What matter if Blavatsky, betrayed by the Coulombs, was proved to be an impostor! What matter if the Mahatma letters were shown to be in the Madame's handwriting! What matter if the officials of her society were convicted of cozenage, and their theosophy had degenerated into theosophistry! There still remained the grand moral teaching with its unselfish thought to better social conditions, and the elite of all "deceived deceivers" were still proud to acknowledge themselves Esoteric Buddhists.

The esoteric or occult elements of Theosophy outbud from the Upanishads. Their germs are to be found in those "excursions into the higher and freer regions of thought," as Professor Whitney called them, which characterize these Brahmanical treatises. The several schools of Hindu philosophy recognized

the existence of a subtle inner body corresponding with the astral body of modern Theosophy, according to which four elements constitute man :

1. The material or physical body, visible and tangible ; no passive piece of mechanism, but a living creature with a consciousness of its own.

2. The fluidic perisoul or astral body, the tenuous involucrum or vesture of the transmigrating spirit, on which the characteristics of the physical body are impressed.

3. The soul, Ego, or individual.

4. The spirit or Divine Father and life of man's system.

The physical and the astral body constitute the masculine principle ; the soul, the feminine principle ; the spirit is an emanation from God and therefore *is God*. The astral and mental bodies, as formed at rebirth, are purely the expression of the Ego. The physical body is the instrument on which the Ego plays.

The astral body, more specifically, is an ethereal duplicate of the physical body, the ghost or materialized form of communicating intelligences. Although it is admittedly possible in the intervals of spirit life, Sinnett

declares that the Mahatmas disapprove of active intercourse with departed human beings, for such communications may retard and embarrass the spiritual development of those who have once been in advance of us, as garden plants pulled up by curious children are checked in their growth.

Turning now to the diagnostic features of Theosophy, we encounter a system the very opposite of that to which we have pinned our faith—a repellent, irreversible fatalism which knows no pardon for the sake of a vicarious Saviour, but demands that sin be atoned for by re-birth into hundreds of earth lives, many of them passed in heart-sick agony, some in one sex, some in the other ; for the Ego of Theosophy is sexless. Theosophists declare that this theory of incarnation is founded on the personal experience of so-called “Adepts,” and hence has claims to our acceptance that Christianity, the religion of unquestioning faith, has not. But where is the proof of re-incarnation ? Among the millions who have transmigrated there certainly should somewhere be one, call him Adept if you please, retaining a recollection of some prenatal experiences. The testimony of one such person would outweigh tons of published twad-

dle—one, with the refreshing assurance of the Philosopher of Agrigentum, who declared : “ I perfectly remember the time before I was Empedocles, that I was once a boy, then a girl, a plant, a glittering fish, a bird that cut the air.” We have all been other people, but not one of us can recall a single happening in any former life. And yet the theory tallies with a widespread fancy that sometimes it would seem as if we were being re-introduced, after the lapse of dreamy years, to scenes and experiences and thoughts once familiar. Wrote Dante Rossetti :—

“ I have been here before,
 But when, or how, I cannot tell :
 I know the grass beyond the door,
 The sweet keen smell,
 The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.
 “ You have been mine before—
 How long I may not know :
 But just when at that swallow’s soar
 Your neck turned so,
 Some veil did fall—I knew it all of yore.
 “ Then, now—perchance again !
 O round mine eyes your tresses shake !
 Shall we not lie as we have lain
 Thus for love’s sake,
 And sleep and wake, yet never break the chain ? ”

Perhaps you may suspect these verses of Rossetti’s were suggested by Buddha’s introduction to Yasôdhara. Plato taught pre-

natal existence, and treats the soul's intuition of the Beautiful as a reminiscence of it. In Wordsworth's Ode on the "Intimations of Immortality," beautiful expression is given to the preexistence theory:—

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home."

Theosophists have even pointed to the Bible itself for proof of their fundamental doctrine. You will remember the question the disciples put to Christ: "Master, did this man sin or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John ix. 2.) The Jews at that time believed in the transmigration of souls. If congenital blindness was a punishment for sin, then that sin must have been committed in a previous state of existence. But Christ said, No. The man's affliction was not the penalty of personal or inherited transgression. "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

Theosophy offsets the Christian doctrine

of atonement with its Hindu theory of metempsychosis—which must be *de fide* because the Mahatmas so teach. It traces the history of human souls from inorganic embodiments to reincarnations of men in other men. The practical working of the plan may be illustrated as follows: A New York vaudeville actress of unsavory reputation dies; and her Ego with its unattractive Karma transmigrates into a boy consecrated to the Church, whose life-struggle with tuberculosis, poverty, and disappointments, makes considerable impression on the total of wickedness amassed by the woman of the stage. The relentless Ego, with the imposed penalty thus partially discharged, next finds expression in the person of an Austrian gambler, who adds vastly more to the original account than the clergyman was able to cancel. Hence, when the wandering Ego accepts from a heartless destiny, as its fourth tenement, the body of an Italian microcephalic child born with various stigmata of degeneration, its short but painful physical life crushed out by the hideous freightage of inherited sin, substantially checks the accumulating moral deficit. And so the ever-varying surplus of unatoned-for offenses is passed along *ad infinitum*.

Thus the Theosophist, while accepting the testimony of revelation that the world lies in wickedness and that this wickedness demands expiation, provides a system of retribution by running foil with the Vedânta. Pain and self-sacrifice indeed atone for sin, but by a method grotesquely complex and monstrously unjust ; for no one knows whose sins his sufferings are making satisfaction for, nor the nature and extent of those sins. Such is the fantastic speculation that results when fools who "rush in where angels fear to tread," attempt to improve on the Divine scheme.

Theosophy teaches the evolution of the soul by means of these repeated incarnations, and boldly calls into service the Darwinian theory to relight the long-extinguished corpse-candles of a heathen graveyard. Says Annie Besant, on whom has fallen the mantle of Blavatsky :—

" One divine Life, given as a seed for the life of man ; that seed growing by reincarnation, the infolded powers of the Spirit becoming the unfolded powers of the man made God—such is the secret of evolution. Those who in the early days of humanity gave to it revelation dealt with the early

stages of the human soul, stimulating its growth; those who appealed to intuition recognized the growing soul which possessed a harvest of experience; those who spoke of happiness and virtue as one—were grasping after the oneness of all things and the perfect happiness that lies only in the development of all. Thus (that is, by reincarnation) the human soul develops out of ignorance into partial knowledge, out of partial knowledge into divine life.

“Even conscience is evolved by reincarnation. Born into the world utterly ignorant and therefore without knowledge of good or evil, the soul at first could not recognize any difference between right and wrong. At that early period every experience was useful simply as experience, and everything encountered in life had some new lesson to impart to the infant soul. It was found that happiness followed some actions—those that were in harmony with the laws of nature—and that misery followed others—those that were in contravention with these laws. By these results the soul slowly learned to distinguish between the actions that made for progress and those which made for retardation. As the soul passed through incarna-

tion after incarnation, it gathered a large store of these experiences of actions and their results. Certain classes of actions had led to happiness and growth, other classes to unhappiness and delay. The first classes, it decided, were those which it was desirable to repeat, while the latter should be entirely avoided. When the time had arrived for the return to earth, and the soul was employed in making for itself a new mind, it wove into this new mind the conclusions on desirable and undesirable actions to which it had come when reviewing its previous earth-life. Some of these were clear and definite: 'That course of action led to sorrow, this course to joy; performing that deed I reaped misery, performing this I found content and peace. In the future I will avoid that, and I will do this.'

"These conclusions form what we call conscience or moral instinct. Regarding the nature of conscience in this way, we arrive at an understanding of its limitations. When anything comes before the soul similar to its past experiences, the registered decision asserts itself and the 'voice of conscience' is heard; but when new circumstances arise and no registered decision is available, con-

science is dumb." This is evolution out-at-elbows!

Theosophy is thus clearly a furbishing up of worthless wares to render them marketable; a rehabilitation of Brahmanical philosophy, linked with an attempt to drive sense and science into its jumble of mystical nonsense, as is unmistakably shown by the Besant theory of the evolution of conscience; a compound of Upanishad conceptions and the commonplaces of modern science, with the design of dazzling at any cost. It places a scientific construction on childish Hindu fables, which it claims possess a recondite meaning, its interpretations being of much the same nature as a contention that the History of Goody Two-Shoes is really a quaint treatise on the nebular hypothesis of La Place, or the polyhedric theory of Señor Soria. Theosophy affects peerless scholarship, but talks learned nonsense. Blavatsky's "Isis Unveiled" is chaos itself. It is voluble in its hints of amazing secrets to be revealed and promise-crammed of supernatural powers to be acquired by mysterious training; and these are the lures that deceive. Carlyle somewhere said that England contained thirty millions of people—mostly fools! The

remark might well be extended to some other lands which are overstocked with sufferers from psycho-sensorial disturbances. Herein you have an explanation of the popularity of Theosophy. Surface-skimming Christians are easily entrapped by the tuzzimuzzy shreds of oriental wisdom.

Theosophy has adopted from pagan religions the conception of a female principle in Deity; an idea rigidly excluded by pure Christianity, which regards the mother of Jesus only as blessed among women. Deity is without sex.

Theosophy borrows its god from the Bhagavad Gîtâ; the Attributeless yet infinitely Attributed, the Impotent Nothing of Hindu philosophy. Its supreme being is thus a powerless nonentity, a distant spiritual jelly-fish, a god without ethical vigor, without the personality accorded to atoms. Indeed, Theosophists are teaching that each true upward step in their evolution implies a getting rid, a subduing, a dissolving, of the personality. The god of Theosophy cannot feel for man. His knowledge of what takes place on earth is comparable to the knowledge a photographic film possesses of the scenes that are focussed upon it. He is deaf to the

cry of the sin-convicted for pardon and uplift. There is no God to the Theosophist save the god each man can himself become. He is now awaiting a twelfth and last Messiah, whose mission is to harmonize into one religion the discordant teachings of eleven predecessors—Adam, Enoch, Fohi, Brigu, Zoroaster, Thoth, Moses, Laotsze, Jesus, Muhammad, and Ghengis Khan! Such is the pretended dream of this false system—a fusing of all the faiths of the world in the crucible of Theosophy; a reduction of the universe to one substance, whether it be mind, or matter, or neither, from which principle all the phenomena of the physical and the spiritual world are deduced. And this is palpable monism.

Christianity proclaims the eternal responsibility of the individual soul for every thought and word and action, and insists upon the necessity of repentance for the remission of sins. Theosophy teaches that there is no real punishment for sin except what is incident to earth-life, under the laws of cause and effect, or under the laws of reincarnation in some lower human tenement. There is no exclusion from a future of happiness by reason of unrepented of, or un-

atoned for, sin. The heaven of Theosophy, Nirvâna, when attained is practical effacement of the conscious Ego, intellectual syncope that knows no wakening; a worthless salvation. Under such a system men are not deterred from sin, for, there being no intellectual activity in Nirvâna, thought not only ceases, but ceases to be damnation (the hell of Christianity).

The fact that death does not interrupt the course of consciousness; the fact that we are to be immediately and forever conscious of all the thoughts we have entertained, the passions we have indulged, the ingratitude we have cherished, the regret for unimproved opportunity, the remorse for thoughtless or malicious action; the fact that it is consciousness which will make eternity a heaven or a hell for us, is among the most awful of human apprehensions. Christianity is the religion of consciousness; Theosophy is the hypothesis of swoon. The one "begins nowhere, leads nowhere, ends nowhere." The other begins with God, the Creator of all things visible and invisible; leads on to Christ, the concrete crucified Redeemer; and ends in a heavenly life characterized by conscious possession of bodily and mental

powers, by association with glorified loved ones, by joyous activity in an affectionate and freely rendered service. The one deals with phantoms; the other, with actualities. The Theosophist is indifferent to verities, and dabbles in the theoretical and the occult. The Christian adduces incontestable facts in evidence of his belief, and uncompromisingly thrusts aside theory in his loyalty to the Religion of Reason.

The intent of Theosophy is to dishonor Christ; hence it pompously trumpets the welcome doctrine that men have no need of a Saviour, and has seized on the theory of reincarnation, through which every man may atone for his own sins, in order to rid the world of a necessity for Jesus. Its cardinal tenet is salvation through personal effort and merit, won by one's own Ego, slowly attained in many incarnations.

Christianity, armed with incontrovertible proof of the death and the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, points ever to the Cross on which the Son of God and the Son of man gave his life for the sins of the whole human race—for the brothers who lived in the elder time, reaching out their helpless hands to Heaven; for the thousands of millions who

have been hidden from the Sun of Righteousness in the depths of ignorance and fanaticism ; for the thousands of millions who have caught the energy of the divine sun-rays and lifted the nations from the plane earthly to the plane angelic. Through the blood of Christ and the electing grace of God, man is saved. Christianity proclaims Jesus Christ the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, once offered, on Calvary—once and for all time. In this concrete, approachable, comprehensible Saviour, human reason finds its God incarnate, and owns its rightful allegiance.

Theosophy represents an organized assault on the Son of God. Through the lips of Col. Olcott it has announced its intention "to tear Christianity to tatters." Blavatsky, perhaps in a spirit of paronomasia, named the monthly organ of her sect "Lucifer." And yet, through its pretended mission to spread pure and noble thoughts, Theosophy tempts so insidiously as to disarm suspicion. The gospel it presents for our acceptance bristles with moral aphorisms, and exhorts to a virtuous, unselfish, philanthropic life. But its beauty is as the beauty of flowers that win their pallid tints and

nauseous odors from the festering bodies of dank cemetery corners. It begins with a complimentary patronage of Jesus, making him a great Mahatma who rose through successive incarnations to a control of natural laws and forces. It ends by ushering him off the stage into an inconspicuous seat at the rear of its theater. Thousands of ardent seekers after truth have been attracted by its pinchbeck excellences. Thousands who have embraced Theosophy would, at the outset, have recoiled with horror had they been able to penetrate the meretricious brilliancy of the photosphere and view the black, forbidding crust behind.

We cannot contemplate without a sigh men and women burying their talents in this whited sepulcher of delusion, wasting their lives in a fruitless search for the gold of truth—their duty forgotten, their labor misapplied, their learning sacrificed, their genius abused, their God defied. Christianity, like a benignant Sun, is shining on these misguided ones; but their moral polyopia multiplies the image of the luminary, or intellectual amaurosis hides its life-giving radiations from their souls. We cannot but feel that they are included among the number of those

we are warned against in these clear and specific words of him whose second coming we await in faith, the Alpha and Omega of all Messiahs :

“There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders ; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert ; go not forth : Behold, he is in the secret chambers ; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west ; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matt. xxiv. 24-27.)

What is Christianity More than Spiritism, the Yoke-Fellow of Theosophy?

(Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils [literally, doctrines concerning demons, or spiritual intelligences]. 1 Tim. iv. 1.)

ABOUT thirty years ago, Robert Dale Owen wrote to the skeptical President Feltton, of Harvard College :

“Time, the great teacher, will decide between us. Ten years—probably less—will see the question determined whether the spiritual hypothesis is destined to grow in favor and assume station as a reality, or to sink into discredit as a mere figment of the brain.”

The Spiritual Hypothesis has grown in popular favor. It has not “blown over” as was predicted. It shows no signs of wane. Spiritism, which has been rampant in the world for forty centuries, numbers to-day five hundred millions of adherents among the pagan nations, the devil-worshipers of the Eastern hemisphere, who believe they are in communication with unseen powers ; and out of the seventy-five millions of human

beings who constitute the population of the United States, no fewer than fifteen millions are tinctured with spiritistic beliefs. Thus this faith which leads the swarm of lying wonders has assumed proportions that warrant a thorough investigation of its doctrines. In taking up its study, we shall not be breaking on a wheel the butterfly of needless apprehension.

Among the remarkable claims advanced by its advocates is that of novelty; it is heralded as new; as "the harbinger of a Modern Dispensation which is to revolutionize the faith and practices of mankind." But there is nothing new about Spiritism. It has cursed the earth since the days of the Nephilim. The older world abounds with its desolate shrines and corroded idols. History repeats, age after age, the story of belief in mysterious invisible malevolent powers, whom men feared, consulted, and sought to conciliate. Those who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God are constrained to believe that there exist in the universe intelligences other than human selfs. Socrates conceived himself to be attended by such an intelligence, his demon or guardian influence, under whose supernatural guidance he became the inde-

pendent, deep-thinking, strong-speaking, falsehood-spurning, life-sacrificing philosopher we know him to have been. Unimpeachable historical testimony proves a continual intercourse, by means of writing, clairvoyance, and clairaudience, between similar outside personalities and the sons of men ; and establishes the correctness of those ancient Scriptures which assert the existence of a Personal Devil, the enemy of God and the arch deceiver of mankind. It were unnecessary on the present occasion to search the catalogue of ancient manifestations, spectral appearances, and healing mediums, interesting as a review of the history of Spiritism might be. Suffice it this morning to note the attitude of the Christian Bible toward the early phases of this religion, and to contrast its distinctive doctrines with those of Christianity.

Says Blackstone in his Commentaries:

“ To deny the actual existence of witchcraft and sorcery is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God in various passages of both Old and New Testament ; and the system of those persons who through the agency of wicked spirits perform acts beyond the ordinary powers of man is a truth to which every nation in the world hath in its turn borne testimony, whether by well-attested examples, or prohibitory laws which at least suppose the possibility of commerce with evil spirits.”

We should expect to find God very early

in the history of his dealings with our race take notice of a sin so atrocious, if it were indeed a reality—and we do. No sooner were the ten commandments that comprise the moral law promulgated on Sinai than the Almighty directed Moses “to set before” the chosen people special modifications and extensions of them, called judgments; laws for the punishment of murderers, of cursers of parents, of nameless crimes, against all which the penalty of death was pronounced; and among these blazed with fiery significance the command, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” And later, in the Book of Leviticus (xx. 26, 27), among the regulations relative to worship and sacrifice, “And ye shall be holy unto me, for I the Lord am holy,” therefore “A man or woman that hath a familiar spirit [that is enamored of a demon], or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones.” Again, in the same book (xix. 31), the people are warned; “Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.” And once more, in Deuteronomy (xviii. 9): “When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do

after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire [fire-baptism, to secure the protection of a false god], or that useth divination [seeks to obtain knowledge of secret or future events by divining with rods or cups, by consultation of teraphim or wooden images, by inspection of entrails or haruspication], or an observer of times [a dream interpreter; perhaps one given to ill-wishing or casting the evil-eye], or an enchanter [one who by observing omens, the flight of birds, the movements of serpents, etc., professed to read the secrets of the unseen world], or a witch [a person entered into compact with Satan or with evil spirits for the purpose of obtaining supernatural powers], or a charmer [one who bound with spells, through the use of amulets and incantations], or a consulter with familiar spirits [with invisible spiritual agents; like the Witch of Endor and the Pythoness of Delphic Oracle fame], or a wizard [wise one, credited with preternatural gifts], or a necromancer [a consulter with the dead]. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord"—because all such practices are so many incentives to

idolatry. Inquiry of the dead is emphatically forbidden in the eighth chapter of Isaiah: "And when they say to you: Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that peep and that moan, give this answer: Should not a people rather consult its God? on behalf of the living should men consult the dead?"

These passages are full of import. What is the meaning of such prohibitions unless there actually were witches and wizards, necromancers, and consulters of familiar spirits? To say, as some have done, that these injunctions no more prove the existence of the crimes they prohibited than the statutes against sorcery enacted by the British Parliament in the reign of James I is nothing to the point when we remember that, while the laws of England were the creation of erring humanity, the Jewish code was framed by Omniscience itself. Nor can we think that capital punishment would have been denounced on mere impostors; the frequency, solemnity, and severity of the denunciation, leave no room to doubt that the offenders here meant were dealers in actual magic, seekers after strange gods, guilty of a gross form of idolatry, lamentably lacking in faith, as shown by their reluctance to trust God for

their present and eternal welfare and their readiness to stoop to consultation with devils.

Besides these general allusions, we have in the Bible a record of two remarkable cases in which unquestionable wonders were wrought by supernatural art. In Exodus, it will be remembered, is an account of the miraculous plagues inflicted on the Egyptians through Moses and Aaron; and we are told that the magicians summoned by the king, when bidden to put forth their powers in contrast, produced in the case of three of the miracles the same results. And can any of us forget how the first unhappy monarch of Israel, after suppressing the prohibited crime, had recourse to the witch of Endor, as his crown was crumbling, to obtain through her the information God had seen fit to withhold? What a degrading picture! The heaven-anointed king became the suitor of a sorceress; not the wrinkled beldam of story, but a woman in the flush of unchaste comeliness, "with swarthy cheek and bold black eyes brow-bound with burning gold," her charms set off by the graceful robe of her country confined by a jeweled circlet about her waist, the wand of her clandestine office in her false

right hand. Fancy her ready to deceive with ventriloquism and machinery her royal patron. Imagine her transfixed with horror at the unlooked-for success of her necromancy as she screams, "I see a god coming up out of the earth!" when the real Samuel, permitted by the Almighty in his anger to arise, and not evoked by the conjurations of the woman with a familiar spirit—or, as others interpret it, Satan himself, personating the prophet—appeared, to pronounce the appalling verdict, "God is become thine adversary." And you know the result. No long time after the poet-king sung over his fallen foe that most pathetic of elegies:—

"Thy glory, Israel, droops its languid head;
On Gilboa's heights thy rising beauty dies.
In sordid piles there sleep the illustrious dead;
The mighty victor fallen and vanquished lies."

We learn from other passages in Scripture that when the eyes of men have been divinely opened, they have beheld angelic beings in the surrounding air, and as individual existences, taking part in human affairs. Thus, in Job, Satan, in answer to a question of the Lord's, says that he is come "from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it;" and he is afterward made a direct instrument of the Almighty in

his dealings with man. So, in the 22d chapter of 1 Kings, the prophet Micaiah thus explains the infatuation of King Ahab: "Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And HE said, Thou shalt entice him and prevail: go forth, and do so."

Elsewhere in Holy Writ particular angels are represented as being sent on divine errands, and while thus commissioned as holding intercourse with men. God has given us a past pregnant with such examples for our instruction and security. While history was making and humanity was inexperienced, he directed men in visions; he taught them by miracles; he corrected their disobedience by punishments severe and startling; he removed promptly by death the

adulterer, the child-stealer, the perjurer, the necromancer, the witch. But with the coming of the Son of Man a new day dawned, a day of peace on earth, good will toward men. We are left now to study the past that we may deal with the exigencies of the present and forecast the contingencies of the future. Moreover, the tares and the wheat, in God's providence, are permitted to grow together till the harvest.

The birth of the Prince of Peace but stimulated Satan to renewed efforts at deception—if it were possible, of the very elect; and St. Paul (1 Tim. i. 4) feels it incumbent upon him to warn men against the counterfeit miracles and to denounce witchcraft as among the deadly sins. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron. . . . If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ."

Again, in the 5th chapter of Galatians, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, un-

cleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, *witchcraft*, hatred, . . . envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like : of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

You will see from this and other quoted passages that in the Bible, *witchcraft* is always associated with unbridled lewdness, equally hateful in the sight of God ; for to the wizard or witch were freely given by Satan magical powers and a life of unlicensed indulgence in sensual pleasures. The career of such a bargainer was dramatized with powerful effect in the immortal tragedy of Marlowe and in the Goethean "*Faust*."

The phenomena of the modern *séance*—including the suspension of various physical laws; automatic phenomena like table-tilting; spirit writing, drawing, and photographing; luminous appearances, spirit music, quasi-human voices; impersonation, other personalities taking possession of the medium; and materialization, the crowing wonder of Spiritism—have been variously explained as follows :

(1) They are purely imaginary.

(2) They are accounted for on certain

scientific principles which are not yet perfectly understood.

(3) Spiritism is a kind of insanity.

(4) The opinion of the Church: In all recondite spirit manifestations that son of perdition is revealed whose coming is "with all powers and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness," "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God;" nay, more, who "sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 9).

Are the phenomena entirely imaginary?

When scientific men, deliberately met for the purpose of investigating inexplicable phenomena, decide that such phenomena are not due to trickery but exhibit a force acting in the physical world otherwise than through the brain or muscles of a possessed medium, we cannot but believe that, divesting spiritism of all the humbug, and making due allowance for hypnotic influence, imposture, self-delusion, and hallucination, much will be left that seeks explanation in some better theory than that of imagination. We certainly have incontestable evidence of the genuineness of some of the phenomena.

Are the phenomena due to vital magnet-

ism or psychic force? Hypnotic suggestion or thought transference?

A favorite theory with some scientists, who, witnessing the manifestations, attempt thus to account for them. They speak of them as "phenomena in advance of their explanation," and declare that as the law governing them is not understood, thousands fly to the supernatural for an explanation. They predict a correct solution of all the phenomena in time to come, when "we shall have a perfect system of science and natural law, by which every phenomenon in the material world can be explained as perfectly as is now an eclipse of the sun." The "intelligent force that is not fully understood" is thought to proceed from the nervous systems of the individuals operating to produce the phenomena. Contemporary psychology tends to the doctrine that "different consciousnesses or different aggregates of states of consciousness may combine and interpenetrate, somewhat analogously to what theologians mean by the communion of souls." Moreover, one's subliminal self may communicate automatically with other human subliminal selves; and on this hypothesis, coupled with that of alternating personality, about ninety per cent. of so-called

spiritual phenomena are explicable. Thus might also be explained the neutralization of manifestations by an antagonistic state of mind in one of the operating circle. Now whereas hypnotic suggestion exercised collectively or individually, either deliberately or automatically, might account for many if not most of the slighter phenomena, no psychic force, no effort of will, could elicit intelligent replies to questions of which both mediums and sitters are profoundly ignorant, or account for the more startling manifestations which certainly imply the cooperation of outside intelligences.

The fact that the "control" is altogether different from any possible waking self of the medium, and often displays unaccountable acquaintance with the life histories of persons the medium never met and knows nothing of, is frankly stated by Professor James of Harvard University.* Now if the information imparted be unknown to the medium or to other persons present at the *séance*; if it be beyond their powers of invention, but still be due to influences wrought on the medium's mind by minds outside her own; and if such minds are not the minds of those present—

* "Psychology," p. 214.

what minds are they? Psychological extremists, reasoning analogically, admit to-day that human subliminal selves can communicate automatically with outside spirits as well as with other human subliminal selves!

We have no evidence to prove that the spirits of the blessed dead are concerned in these phenomena, which have been witnessed and verified by many careful, honest, and intelligent observers. The idea of such spirit intercourse is repugnant to reason. Aside from the fact that, if the communications be accepted as messages from the souls of the righteous departed, such a belief cannot be reconciled with an exalted conception of the state of disembodied spirits—a state of wandering about the earth and being conversant with human affairs—we are confronted with the equally significant fact that the intellectual status of all circles is foisonless and low. No important truths are communicated; the revelations made by our alleged deceased relatives are distasteful to us and, what is most conclusive, utterly at variance with their gifts and characters. Not a page of mediumistic literature has the smallest value. More unmitigated rubbish was never issued from the printery. As a result of all this, the pursuit

of Spiritism has been abandoned by thousands who do not contest the reality of the fundamental phenomena.

Are the phenomena explicable on the ground of insanity?

If so, they would be seen only by persons suffering from disorders of the supreme nerve centers of the brain. There are many instances of insane persons imagining themselves in communion with the souls of the dead, or attended by substantial spirit forms who are in some instances kind to them, in others brutally abuse them. The insanity of the painter Blake was of this type. When confined in Bethlehem Hospital, this great genius believed that he actually conversed with Michael Angelo and Edward III., with Moses and the worthies of Old Testament history; he dined with Semiramis; he walked in the streets of Jerusalem the Golden, and drew with his crayon portraits of the spirits that came to visit him, filling large portfolios. Blake's is a typical case; but sane men have seen stranger things. The hallucination theory is not tenable.

To what conclusion, then, are we forced? Evidently that modern Spiritism, stripped of all delusion, winnowed of fraud, legerdemain,

and explicable psychological phenomena, is a reality ; a modern phase of the prohibited sin involved in attempted communication with demons. When the manifestations are so awfully real, so evidently the work of mysterious, unseen intelligences that those viewing them, overcome by horror, fall into hysterical convulsions, surely no subjective psychic force exercised consciously or automatically by those present can be looked to in explanation. We naturally turn for a solution of the problem to the unseen world, which our Bible represents as palpitating with spirit life.

The intelligences that work the phenomena are not the spirits of the departed, for these are the spirits in prison and abide, according to the teachings of Christ, in Paradise ; that is, a temporary resting-place, or mayhap suffering-place, between us and eternity, where unless they are omniscient they cannot be conversant with the things of earth—and they are not omniscient. Except in the case of Samuel just cited, if the apparition were Samuel sent to earth in God's anger, there is not a hint in Scripture of the possibility of communication with the dead. Thank God, our dear departed ones are not at the beck and call of spiritistic mediums.

Nor are these intelligences good angels; by exclusion, then, they must be malignant demons, and for two of the very best of reasons :

(1) The phenomena have instantly ceased when ordered to in the name of God's Son. The operating intelligences are subject to the authority of Jesus.

(2) The effect of *séance* procedures, when persisted in, is physical and mental ruin. Would good angels work such results, or could our dead friends desire them? Monomania or hopeless insanity completes the purpose of Satan: he has wrecked a human mind; he has rendered useless a bright life; laid away in a napkin the talent of gold, if he has not a claim on the soul for all eternity. This is the almost unvarying result of giving up life to *séance* work. Dr. Edmonds reports that, of a comparatively small number of mediums of his acquaintance, "one had well-marked mental disturbance; another had been the inmate of a lunatic asylum; a third was seized with a mysterious form of paralysis," etc.; and his experience is that of all observers. Asylum superintendents bear witness that Spiritism induces morbid psychological states, tends to develop insane delu-

sions, and is a most fruitful maniac-making religion. Indeed, those who have seen mediums rolling on the floor, giving utterance to heart-rending screams, and disfiguring their bodies after the manner of lunatics, may well believe it. To quote the Rev. H. L. Hastings: "As the temporary mania of alcoholic intoxication finally ends in the settled madness that fills our insane hospitals with the hopeless wrecks of drink-ruined minds; so these evil demons, after deceiving and beguiling the unwary until they yield themselves soul and body to their control, grasp the deepest centers of mental, nervous, and vital action, disturb the physical forces, disorder the nervous system, subvert the will, and unbalance the judgment, until the temporary frenzy of spirit-control settles into the permanent madness of demoniacal possession, which wrecks the mental and moral constitution, and leaves the madhouse or the suicide's grave to conceal the finished work of evil spirits from the gaze of the outside world."

What, then, must be our conclusion but that the ill-wishing demons whom we are warned to shun, not the well-wishing angels we are commanded to reverence nor the glorified personalities who have gone before,

work the phenomena of Spiritism to promote their sinister designs—evil spirits, who gain the soul's confidence to lure it on to ruin. With a sigh of pity for those deluded ones who tell us that the main object of such manifestations is to counteract materialism by demonstrating the immortality of the soul and giving assurance of life and progress beyond the grave ; with a shudder of horror at those unbelievers who, adopting Spiritism as their religion, make the devil their God, who assume to know better than Christ in offering to men a religion whose prominent tenet is communication with risen souls—and solemn indeed is Christ's declaration, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead"—we turn from this subject, thus bereft of its mystery, happy if with the resolve to eschew all meddling with the unprofitable works of darkness.

It is inconsistent with a proper Christian faith even to listen to the platitudes or view the disgusting impostures of these people who call themselves "Spiritualists." Their religion has been defined by a zealous adherent as "the recognition of man as a spiritual being who, even while on earth, can, under

certain conditions, hold communication with spirits who have left the mortal form. It embraces all studies which throw light on the nature, forces, and laws of the spiritual world, and its connection with the natural world, and on the interests of man, as a spiritual being related to both worlds." But Spiritism is more than this. It not only looks to disembodied spirits for advice and guidance, it denies that Jesus died for our sins or made any atonement therefor. It regards Christ as a healing medium, just as Theosophy makes him a Mahatma ; flouts his divinity, and loses sight of him in a crowd of benevolent demons, explaining his miracles as "the results of a natural law of which his mediumistic power enabled him to avail himself."

Like Theosophy, it forces a feminine principle into the Godhead ; and some of its professors have announced the coming of a female Messiah, a second Eve, the divine Mother of all the living. To a select few, behind locked doors at an "inner circle of the Mystery of the Divine Presence," Christ is asserted to have revealed himself with a female figure standing beside him, a celestial feminine personality—giving point to his own warning : "Wherefore, if they shall say

unto you, Behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not." God is made dual, He and She, as much woman as man, Mother as well as Father—"an hermaphrodite spirit cleft in twain and manifested in two outward forms." The worship of the Babylonian Istar, the Lady Queen of Heaven, corresponding to the Egyptian Isis, has been revived in the very shadow of our churches, and the revelation made to the seer of the Apocalypse has assumed the form of a reality at the close of the nineteenth century: "I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy. . . . And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication—and upon her forehead a name written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth" (Rev. xvii. 3-6).

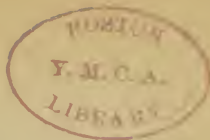
In its position that nothing can be holier than the communion between a human being and the spirit of a loved one gone before, Spiritism discards a Divine Comforter. Communicating spirits perform the offices of the

Holy Ghost. Thus affection for one's dead kinsfolk takes precedence of God-love, and faith expires. The attitude of sympathy and condonation here assumed by certain Christian clergymen, who are proclaiming that those whom we have loved and lost are free to come back to us in spirit form to console and to direct, "so that the fallen statesman and the dying mother may return, the one to inspire patriotism in the people and the other to guide and bless her orphan children," manifestly implies attempted subtraction from the honor, the glory, and the sacred function of the Holy Spirit of God. It is the blasphemous voice of Theosophy sounding from the Christian pulpit. For "liberated souls," declares Annie Besant in her "Theosophical Review," "remain among us as Revealers, as helping divine Teachers, bearing the burden of the flesh; quickening by their spoken words our nascent intuition, and by their revelation of truth aiding us to climb more swiftly toward the light."

The theory that both God, the Infallible Guide, and well-meaning but fallible disembodied souls are together inspiring and directing human beings, often necessarily at cross purposes, would involve an inevitable

clashing of influences that must long ago have thrown the world into chaos. The belief of Massey's, that the Holy Ghost speaks to an afflicted mother through the spirit of a departed child, while not consonant with reason, is nicely calculated to destroy our belief in the immediate accessibility and nearness of Deity. The Bible presents no instance in which any spirit but the Spirit of God has ever influenced men for good.

The teachings of Spiritism regarding marriage are subversive of all respect for the sacredness of the institution as ordained by God. It takes the ground that every person has an "affinity" to whom he or she will eventually be united in the world to come, no matter how disappointing the search for this affinity may be on earth. The evils of wedded life are due to the union of persons who are not such spiritual affinities. Ill-assorted married couples are at liberty to separate. Divorce is justified as soon as companionship becomes for any reason disagreeable or undesirable. Thus the union of hearts after God's holy ordinance is degraded to a living together like beasts in a lair; and a man may break his marriage



vows *ad infinitum* in the pursuit of his spiritual affinity. In this way encouragement is given to licentiousness; a formal marriage finally becomes unnecessary, and men and women literally wrap themselves in the filthy skirts of Ashtoreth.

Spiritism asserts that everyone will be married in the next world, and that the mates or affinities of those who remain single on earth live in waiting in the Spirit-land. Hence it affects to solemnize the marriage of women with demons. It would thus seem as if Spiritism were a preparation for a second advent of the Nephilim, for it expressly declares that "those in communion with a class of spirits above them run no risk of forming uncongenial matrimonial relations, as a spirit out of the form can perceive affinities more readily than a person in the natural body; consequently, marriages formed by them will be happy ones, and the offspring of such, gentle and loving, harmonizing the future."

Spiritism is a foe to all intellectual, moral, and material progress; but like Theosophy it parades a high aim, namely, the union of all mankind in harmony. For spirit intercourse operates—I quote one of its expositors—

“ 1. Negatively, by removing obstacles to practical reform arising from undue concentration of mind on future interests, to the neglect of present duties. People are so intent on saving themselves from a supposed outward and distant danger, that they neglect the culture of their inner nature. Expecting to be saved by something external, they become selfish and degraded, so as to be incapable of realizing anything but a low phase of being, here or elsewhere. A belief in spiritual intercourse stimulates to self-culture and social reform.”

“ 2. Positively, by spreading a knowledge of the laws of life and health, physical and spiritual; by causing a desire for a higher form of social life, measurably free from the selfish element, gratifying the social faculties by association with congenial minds; by developing our own spiritual nature, so that we can more readily perceive affinities, *matrimonial* and otherwise.”

That is, to condense these statements, Spiritism makes every man his own Christ and free-love the ideal of social happiness.

Signor Damiani was told by a medium that the government of the Spirit world was thoroughly democratic, Heaven was a regular re-

public—a palpable fabrication of the Evil One. The government of Heaven is an Absolute Monarchy—the perfection of all government—and the Absolute Monarch of Angels, Archangels, and Saints Redeemed, is Jehovah, whom we adore as the omnipresent, omnipotent, all-wise, all-good, eternal Personal God, in whom we live and move and have being.

The Christian religion, which has stood the test of centuries, which has passed through the ordeal of fire and sword and triumphed over ignorance and prejudice and infidel assault, inculcates a belief in this God, the Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible, who spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up for us all, and with him freely gives us all things consistent with our highest interests.

A belief in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of this God; begotten of his Father before all worlds, thus of one substance with the Father, and himself the very and eternal God; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and *as the Infinite Power above all law* took upon him man's nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary, assuming a human body with a human soul so that he became truly man; who suf-

ferred death, was buried, and descended into the place of departed spirits that he might undergo the condition of such as die and so satisfy the claims of death ; who has risen, and sits at the right hand of the Father as our High Priest, our Advocate, and Judge ; whose second coming is the blessed hope of the Church.

A belief in the Holy Ghost, the same God though not the same person as the Father and the Son (and herein is a mystery); *whose function is to regenerate the elect*, leading men to faith in Christ ; who inspired the Holy Scriptures, the very oracles of God ; whose influence it is perilous to resist ; whom we are exhorted not to grieve. Thus in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity.

A belief in one universal Church, the flock of the Good Shepherd ; composed of the visible church of Christ, a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are duly administered ; and the invisible church, consisting of those who have gone to their reward, the accepted of God gathered out of all nations, with the holy angels. At the head of this Church is

Christ ; and the terms of admission, baptism with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, coupled with repentance and faith. Oh ! what a privilege to belong to this Church of Christ, militant and triumphant ; to serve as a constituent part of such a glorious organic whole ! Positive I am that there will be no so-called churches pressing their opposite claims, no jarring denominations in the New Jerusalem, no sects in heaven, no church in fragments there, no division of the household of faith.

A beautiful belief in the Communion of Saints—that all the members of the Church Visible are mystically united in Christ with one another and with the members of the church invisible, having spiritual fellowship in common, and in addition thereto fellowship or communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in faith and love and prayer. Thus Christianity makes the living and the dead one blessed society, loving and worshipping the same Lord ; we remembering them and they remembering us ; we living in the blessed hope, nay, certainty, of meeting and recognizing them in the life of the world to come, in the same glorious resurrection when this corruptible shall have put on incor-

ruption and this natural body shall rise a spiritual body and be endowed with spiritual powers through eternity. Carefully contrast this religion with what is called Spiritism. Choose between them. There can be no accommodation, no compromise, no concessions, no fusion of the two faiths ; for God has declared unconditionally that the soul which "turneth unto them that have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people" (Levit. xx. 6).

After all, dear friends, the only temptation this strange faith can offer to intellectuality is the possibility it promises of communicating with the loved ones who have been separated from us. We all have known persons of culture, suffering from the loss of wife or child, or father or mother, take refuge in Spiritism, which gives practical assurance of bodily intercourse with the dead. What one of us has not laid away in the grave at least one whom we would give worlds to communicate with, one whom we would gladly have sacrificed our life to save. And, oh ! if we could open communication with the departed, if we could feel that they were ever near us,

how greatly would the burden of our sorrow be lessened. But does it not seem presumptuous sin in you and in me—when God, for purposes that we cannot fathom and dare not question, has decreed a temporary separation—to defy the divine fiat and spend our time, our substance, nay, prostitute our intellects, in a wicked and unprofitable search for a means of defeating it? I can but regard such a course as the rankest rebellion against the Almighty, and I can only interpret it as evincing a deplorable deficiency in that faith which alone can save. Resort to Spiritism is a pathognomonic symptom of shattered trust. It is smirching many Christian lives with the slime of the serpent. In this Bible we have a history of God's providential dealings during a period of two thousand years with a portion of our race; we have instanced men and women whom he loved; who were after God's own heart. Were communication with the dead lawful, and fraught with satisfaction, would he have concealed from them an innocent means of gratifying the most intense longings of human nature? The answer of the centuries is "No." I cannot but recall the touching lines of Wordsworth in "The Affliction of Margaret," the widow of Penrith:

"I look for ghosts; but none will force
Their way to me. 'Tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead.
For surely, then, I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night
With love and longings infinite."

The inspired monarch of Israel, whom God delighted to indulge and whose heinous sins the Lord did put away, decided this question for you and for me when over the body of Bathsheba's firstborn he cried out, in the anguish of his heart, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

There is but a single road, dear friends, that leads to those who lie in the churchyard. That road was laid out by the Almighty millennia ago, and it passes through the valley of the shadow of death. You and I must traverse it, because it is the ordained way. We know not when the call shall sound for us to set forth upon this thoroughfare of the ages. Let us await God's time and accept his place of meeting in patience and in faith. Let us not be angry at the dispensations of his providence which may have removed from our embraces those we hold most dear. Let us not judge by fallible sense Him who in perfect wisdom, perfect love, is ordering for

the best. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but the time is coming when we shall see face to face; when we shall understand it all.

“God’s plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.”

Ah! dear friends, in that last parting hour, when we are summoned to hear those “many things” Christ has reserved for our ears, if we shall feel that we have sincerely tried to serve Jesus and are deserving, through his merits, of admission to the employments of heaven—what pen can describe, what tongue express the peace, the rapture that shall be ours in this prospect of immediate restoration to the bosoms of those we love! God give us grace so to live this life of probation that when we come into the presence of Him by whom and in whom the sundered souls that are dearer to us than all the interests of life are even to-day growing in beauty and loveliness, we may be adjudged worthy to mingle with them in a communion whose joys transcend the imagination of man; in an eternal, indissoluble companionship.

What is Christianity More than Christian Science?

(For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.)

I EXTRACT from Guyau's "The Non-Religion of the Future" this characteristic declaration of modern infidelity :

"The time is at hand when religious prophets will be replaced by great poets, great metaphysicians, great men of science. Each of us will be able to choose his own prophet, to prefer the genius which is best adapted to his personal intelligence and best serves as an intermediary between him and the eternal Truth ; and each of us will be in the last resort his own priest."

Alas ! there is justification for such a statement. Religious prophets are everywhere betraying their trust. The understanding revolts at the spurious interpretations so-called ministers of Christ are placing on the eternal words of God. Reverence shudders at the prominence they give to man and his antics in the temples of the Almighty, where abso-

lute simplicity alone is appropriate as the grandest compliment the finite being can pay to the Infinite. Sensibility is shocked at the plebeian and unfeeling manner in which they bandy the utterances inspired by the Holy Spirit. Taste shrinks from their affectation of the offensively grotesque in pronunciation, choice of words, manner of delivery, and costume, and shuts her ears to their micaceous styles aglist with the cheap sparkle of a factitious rhetoric. Consistency blushes at their denunciation of the Bible as a misleading gloss, at their double discount of the veracity of the New Testament, and their consequent repudiation by one Christian church only to be cheerfully welcomed by another with their budget of heretical views. What wonder that intellect is driven from our churches to swell the ranks of agnosticism and irreligion! What wonder that the Son of God is shelved, and every man aspires to be his own high priest! What wonder that the Holy Spirit is frozen out, and the weak brother so impatiently turns from Christianity falsely so called to try the spirit of every new Ism that is advertised!

I believe it is this shifting notion of what constitutes Christianity, due to the splinter-

ing of our faith into so many different phases of doctrine ; this conspicuous lack of church uniformity which is unfortunately construed by the superficial observer to mean lack of church unity—that has contributed most to the prevailing indifferentism and unrest, and made possible and even popular the insidious attacks of Antichrist in the form of oriental *fata-morgana* or behind the mask of up-to-date economic democracy and self-seeking business love.

Among the present foes of Christianity, I reckon none more dangerous than so-called Christian Science, which comes in the guise of a good Samaritan, with a metaphysical remedy for disease in one hand and a mildewed theosophy in the other. To the pivotal doctrines of this new religion I ask your attention this morning. They are to be found in a book entitled "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures," by the Rev. Mary Baker G. Eddy of Concord, N. H., the chief expounder of the system. This work—a volume of 665 pages, of which 150,000 copies are in circulation—is styled by Christian Scientists "the Bible-and-Book," "the only ordained pastor" of 300 American churches erected by the adherents of the sect, and

cepted as their gospel by at least one million persons in the United States.

A determination to learn what this Christian Science as a practical religion really is led me, on the evening of Friday, April 22d, 1898, to attend service at the First Church of Christ Scientist, No. 137 West Forty-eighth Street, New York. A large congregation, in which bonnets predominated, was in attendance. The exercises opened with the singing of a hymn, followed by the reading of Psalm xci. with passages from "Science and Health." Silent prayer (not to God) was next announced, at the termination of which the lady in charge made a long address, blazoned as extemporaneous, but which smelt phenomenally of the lamp. The principal point made by the speaker was that the ninety-first psalm, which had been repeated and chanted for two thousand years, had never been understood until Christian Science made plain its mystic meaning. The "secret place of the Most High" is the Ego, or realm of spiritual thought, into which the person conversant with Christian Science methods can retire at will; and when once ensconced in this temple of his interior he realizes the idea of the Psalmist and all dis-

ease and sin "gravitate away from him." He is no longer in danger of the pestilence that walketh in darkness.

In the course of the address, matter was pronounced an illusion ; the giving and taking of drugs was deprecated as criminal ; and publicity was given to a number of remarkable cures, all which might have been mere coincidences—*post hoc* rather than *propter hoc*—or at most the results of telepathy. For example, a man returns from his business all but maniacal with a neuralgic headache. While he is pacing the floor in agony, his wife seeks "a healer," whose treatment is as follows : "Go home and tell your husband that physical suffering is an illusion. There is no such thing; he has no headache." Armed with this prescription, the sympathetic wife starts for the chamber of suffering, to find that at the very time the words above were uttered by the healer the headache left her husband and he became himself again. At the invitation of the speaker, whose eyes rolled dramatically as she rehearsed the particulars of a number of such cures, men and women arose from their seats and "testified," proclaiming their obligation to Christian Science. Tic douloureux, grip, deafness, quinsy,

neurasthenia, even business cares, financial distress, imminent bankruptcy, disappeared or lost their sting under similar treatment. One lady testified that her spectacles were blown off by the wind and smashed on the sidewalk, leaving her helpless. Instead of repairing to an optician's and having a new pair of glasses fitted to her eyes, she bethought her of a neighboring Christian Science healer, who promptly relieved her hypermetropic astigmatism by simply telling her that her eyes were all right and glasses were superfluous. Since this episode her sight has been perfect.

A subsequent investigation of Mrs. Eddy's own church in Concord revealed still sleazier "springes to catch woodcocks."

Apart from the ludicrous features of such exhibitions, it is sad to think that persons apparently intelligent should be so susceptible to imposture, so ready to accept the preposterous tenets of this new religion, the material object of which is manifestly the enrichment of its "healers" and authors at the expense of gulls. But these days of higher education and emancipation for woman awaken in some women activities that seek illicit and perilous outlets. The platform

and the pulpit offer to such unstable minds overpowering attractions; and when to the glamour of public life is added the prestige that attends the promulgation of a new faith—the brummagem notoriety of the claim to a new revelation from a Mother as well as a Father God to a woman who poses as a female Christ—a respectable fraction of the sex thus favored falls promptly into line. The temptation to exchange their normal positions as centers of love and joyousness in the home-circle for offices envired by flatterers and fame-mongers proves irresistible, the allurements of the craze for ephemeral distinction, of the opportunity to be admired by imbeciles for gabbling nonsense.

To these Christian Science converts, the assertions of Mrs. Eddy and her feminine vicars are as unintelligible as they are to Mrs. Eddy herself. The text-books of this woman are a gallimaufry of disconnected, rambling, vacuous postulates. By way of example: "Love thine enemies is identical with Thou hast no enemies; because your enemies are your best friends." "He who is ignorant of hygienic law is more receptive of spiritual power." (Why?) "We need a clean body, rendered pure by mind, not by matter"

(that is, by imagination instead of soap and water). Under the heading, "Dirt and Happiness," Mrs. Eddy says: "A hint may be taken from the emigrant, whose filth does not affect his happiness." (Personal uncleanness is thus indorsed.) "According to the Scriptures, I find that every man is a liar." The Scriptures nowhere commit themselves to such a doctrine. In the Third Chapter of Romans, Paul says, in arguing the prerogative of the Jews, Let every (unbelieving) man be a liar if necessary for the justification of God.

The replies in her "Questions and Answers" are artful evasions or mawkish palavers. To the question, "Can Christian Science cure acute cases, like membranous croup?" is affixed the answer: "It cannot fail to heal in every case of disease, when conducted by one who understands it." Of course that one has never as yet materialized. In the epidemic of membranous croup or diphtheria at Woodsville, N. H., in the fall of 1897, Christian Scientists treated some of the cases with such appalling results as to rouse the indignation of the medical profession throughout the State. From the medico-legal standpoint, the treatment was

equivalent to criminal neglect. There is no authenticated case on record in which Christian Science has "healed" (if by "healed" is meant *removed*) organic disease where medical science had failed—the pet falsehood of its pulpit firebrands. The boast that this school is "*forced* to receive most of its patients from the incurable list of medical practice," is mere pibble-pabble.

Again, "Because God is supreme, materia medica and hygiene are impotent." For the same reason might be added, with equal consistency, food stuffs are of no avail, and washing is an insult to the Most High, "their only supposed efficacy lying in apparently deluding reason."

In "Science and Health," Mrs. Eddy proclaims herself the discoverer of the adaptation of truth to the treatment of disease as well as of sin—a most impudent fabrication, for this principle has been practiced since the days of the patriarchs and prophets. Truth is the conformity of thought with fact, of a statement or belief with reality, and for Mrs. Eddy to lay claim to priority in applying truth to the cure of sin and the treatment of disease is an insult to American enlightenment or an incontrovertible proof of

her own amentia or dotage. Mrs. Eddy places herself as a healer on a par with Jesus Christ, although she floats in an atmosphere far above his social level. The contrast is conspicuous between Eddy, inaccessible in her palace or driven about the capital of New Hampshire, arrayed in purple, like a queen in her victoria; and her alleged prototype, the lowly, approachable, sympathetic Jesus, who had not where to lay his head; who did not accumulate wealth by his services as a healer, but went about footsore and heart-sick in his mission of love. "Like Jesus," she says, "the healer should speak to disease as one having authority over it." In this way she claims to have "changed secretions, elongated shortened limbs, renewed structure, restored the lost substance of lungs, and established healthy organizations where disease was organic." This is equivalent to the assumption of divine power over the laws of nature, an assumption that is not surprising on the part of a woman who declares that "God has been fitting me, during many years, for the reception of a final revelation of the absolute principle of scientific mind-healing."

It was the metaphysics of Jesus—mark

well—not Jesus, that healed the sick. Jesus Christ healed by Christian Science; why, then, should not Mrs. Eddy? And if Mrs. Eddy, why not a legion of aspirants to the divine office? “The miracles of Jesus Christ did not belong to a dispensation now ended; but they illustrate,” continues this fanatic, “an ever-operative divine principle”—recently become operative again, after a retirement of eighteen centuries, in the art of Mrs. Eddy, who presumptuously lays claim to that power over nature possessed by the God of nature alone; that power which opened the eyes of the congenitally blind, cleansed the leper’s neoplasms, and bade the sepulcher give up its dead.

Christian Scientists point to the seventeenth and eighteenth verses of the last chapter of St. Mark’s gospel in defense of their theory that Christ gives the power of healing to all believers: “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

In the first place, the promise was mani-

festly made only to the immediate converts of the first century. In the Diatessaron, or Harmony of the Four Canonical Gospels compiled in the second century by Tatianus the Syrian, the tense is past: "These signs shall follow them that *have* believed on me."

In the second place, the Greek does not bear the interpretation placed upon it, namely, that all sick persons on whom the early disciples should lay hands would recover. The exact translation is: "They shall place their hands on those who are not strong (*ἀρρώστους*—weakly persons, convalescents) and they shall do well (*καλῶς ἐξούσιν*). If this power of healing had been transmitted to all Christian believers, disease would long ago have vanished from the world.

In the third place, the whole passage is pronounced by modern scholarship to be an interpolation introduced into Mark's report at an early period, when various forms of evangelical tradition, written or oral, were still extant. With this fact, it is not to be presumed that Christian Science dreamers are conversant.

Continues Mrs. Eddy in "Science and Health:" "Denial of the possibility of Chris-

tian healing robs Christianity of the very element which gave it divine force and its astonishing success in the first century." The falsehood of this statement is transparent. It was not the skill of its teachers in the healing art that made Christianity the intellectual and moral conqueror of the heathen world; but it was its spiritual quality, its character-transforming quality, its soul-subduing quality, its message to the despairing of a blessed eternity. It was because it constrained the assassin to spare, and the libertine to pause, and the outraged to forgive, that Christianity was enabled to win its treasures from the very hot-beds of Roman depravity. Christ crucified, not Christ the healer, was and is its central figure.

Once more: "God does not employ drugs or hygiene, else Jesus would have recommended and used them in his healing." Hygiene implies cleanliness, and Mrs. Eddy is recommended to count the number of times the word *clean* occurs in the Bible. There is more hygiene, or sanitary science, in the Bible than in any other existing book not a monograph; sanitary science anticipatory of that of to-day in its safeguards against disease. It would seem that Mrs. Eddy has

been sitting in judgment on God's sanitary laws without ever looking into them. The vital statistics of the Jews in various parts of the world—the people who observe the hygienic laws of Moses—show that the death-rate of this race is everywhere lower than that of the Christian or Muhammadan people among whom they live ; that they have fewer still-born children, greater average longevity, and less liability to certain forms of disease, including tuberculosis and scrofula, than other races—and all this amid an environment of poverty and squalor. Nothing but crass ignorance or deliberate intention to deceive could have led to the statement quoted above. Moreover, the astonishing success attending capital operations in modern hospitals, due entirely to surgical cleanliness, clearly demonstrates what may be accomplished by a pains-taking Christian regard for well-understood hygienic laws.

And as to medicines, we read of Hebrew physicians and their healing with drugs from Exodus on. Solomon was a proficient in *materia medica*. Luke practiced medicine at Antioch, perhaps at Troas ; and the skill of "the beloved physician" is known to have been such that his services were in demand

among the Asiatic Greeks. Did not God cry with the voice of Jeremiah, in bewailing the desperate estate of the Jews, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" This certainly implies the divine sanction of medical treatment, and faith in its success on the part of the patient. Farther on, in the same book, we read: "Thus saith the Lord, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. . . . Thou hast no healing medicines." Others have, who are not incurable; but in this case Jacob, his servant, was not susceptible to the effects of medicines on account of the "multitude" of his iniquity. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," are our Saviour's words, and they give unquestionable sanction to the practice of medicine and the use of drugs. Jesus did not depend on the efficacy of medicine in his miracles of healing. Mrs. Eddy is in this instance correct. He did what she cannot do; he commanded as God. Mrs. Eddy may decry medical interference from her standpoint, but she is not justified in so doing by the teachings of this Bible. He who believes in Jewish and early Christian practices must,

then, believe in administering approved drugs as occasion requires.

The clerical profession cannot heal the soul, cannot remit sins ; it is God alone who does this. But its office is to direct souls to God, of whom they may obtain forgiveness by the employment of God-appointed means and in God-appointed ways. In precisely the same manner, the office of the medical profession is to avert the physical consequences of carelessness, ignorance, or sin, through the means God has placed at its disposal. We have no right to withhold the curative medicine, the drug, whatever it may be, that poisons the protoplasm of the offending bacillus or fortifies the human system against the ravages of an exaggerated destructive metamorphosis. Those who do so, trusting to prayer alone, faith, metaphysics, or autohypnotism—those who fail to observe every precaution and to do their human utmost to save the sick in accordance with the latest developments of medical and sanitary science—are murderers, under the Christian interpretation of the law, “Thou shalt not kill.” The argument that “God does not provide drugs for human use” is childish. Drugs are the means provided by the Almighty for prevent-

ing, curing, or alleviating disease; and they are just as much a means, in God's providence, as is food for sustaining the powers of body and mind; as is water for dissolving and floating off waste products; as is sleep for restoring broken nerve currents and canceling the oxygen deficit in the brain. The argument of Mrs. Eddy, if extended, would climax in such absurdities as the following: God did not provide clothes for human beings to wear. They should go nude, imagining themselves warm and screened from one another's sight. God did not provide shelter for their protection; let them stand out at the mercy of the elements and by some clever concentration of mental energy dispel the illusions of hot and cold, soft and hard, wet and dry.

"The human mind," says Mrs. Eddy, "uses one error as a medicine for another. It seeks to oppose malice with revenge, to quiet pain with morphine." Morphine—an alkaloid, not an error—is an indispensable agent in treating inflammatory conditions. Every one is aware that the abuse of the drug is the source of untold suffering among men. So is the abuse of tea, the abuse of food, the abuse of common salt (the salt habit induces diseases

of the kidneys and the skin), the abuse of clothes, the abuse of pleasure-taking; all harmless, if temperately indulged in, all causes of physical, moral, or spiritual disease if used to excess. It is perfectly justifiable to quiet pain with morphine. For that purpose the Lord provided this very principle, which has been known to man as meconium, an extract from the poppy plant, for twice a thousand years; perhaps for another millennium as the nepenthes, or sorrow-removing, pain-subduing drug of Jove-born Helena.

To extract a final passage from Mrs. Eddy's "Key to the Scriptures," embodying a malicious thrust both at religion and the science of medicine: "The ancient Christians were healers. Why has this element of Christianity been lost? Because our systems of religion are governed by our systems of medicine. The first idolatry was faith in matter; the schools have rendered faith in drugs the fashion, rather than faith in Deity."

This smacks of "the new journalism." If the woman is not demented, she must be aware that no school of medicine antagonizes the faith the sick man has in his God and the hope he may entertain of cure from the use of drugs. The two faiths, as she calls them,

have no common ground of meeting. They are utterly dissimilar, as distinct as is the faith manifested in the morning prayer for guidance and forgiveness from the faith in the nutritive qualities of the articles of diet that constitute the morning meal. When a member of a Christian household is dangerously sick, the relatives do not sit down and fold their arms in hopeless helplessness, both giving up and giving in. Nor do they bid the sick person persuade himself that his pain and danger are illusory. But they make use of all the means science is master of to save or prolong his life; and in the hope that the prayer of faith may raise the sick they add their petitions, but couched in language that leaves the question open to the superior judgment of God. This is Christian faith in its highest exercise, a faith which, in submitting the issue to a Personal Wisdom that cannot err and to a Personal Love that cannot fail, far transcends the theosophical self-assurance of Christian Science. It is this attitude in the Christian patient and the Christian physician that effectually gives the lie to Mrs. Eddy's assertion, "Material medicine substitutes drugs for the power of God."

The treatment of the Christian Science

healer is the antipode of that just described. His aim is "to destroy the patient's belief in the physical condition by silently and audibly arguing the opposite facts," representing man as healthful instead of diseased, and showing that it is impossible for matter to suffer, to feel pain or heat or thirst, to be confined to a sick room. If the case to be mentally treated is consumption (directs Mrs. Eddy), "show that the tubercles, hemorrhage, and decomposition, are beliefs only—images of thought superimposed on the body; that they should be treated as error and put out of thought. Then they will disappear." This is arrant quackery, and people treating tuberculosis in this way should be placed behind bars. Tubercular consumption depends on the presence of a well-known bacillus whose growth ultimately leads to the destruction of lung tissue. It has nothing to do with fear (a favorite theory of Mrs. Eddy's), and can never be subdued by any "belief of the mortal mind." If taken in time, under certain conditions the ravages of the parasitic plant may be checked. Christian Science sophists assert that disease is an illusion, there is no such thing. Then they proceed, with pompous mouthing, to "heal" the thing that does not

exist; and end in a parade of wing-flapping and delirious crowing over the conquest of an enemy which they have pronounced purely imaginary.

We might go on for hours rummaging this literary rubbish-heap, this parody on logic, "Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures," the Bible of the Christian Science sect. But enough has been quoted to demonstrate the harlequinade. As the Talmud says, "The more flesh, the more worms."

Yet Christian Science treatment does relieve the sick. It quiets pain, cures certain disorders and, more than this, it singularly elevates the moral, emotional, and intellectual nature of those who trustfully submit to it. The falsehood and the danger of the system are encountered in the barefaced endeavor of the impostors who are giving it publicity to prove a mission of divine origin, and thus to bolster its authority by miracle-mongering.

Christian Science effects its seemingly astonishing cures through means well known to every psychologist and educated physician: hypnotism and auto-suggestion.

The phenomena of hypnotism are scientifically explicable on the supposition of a double Ego, a duplex personality, implying

two distinct states of consciousness—one, called the Primary Consciousness, involving the mind's recognition of its own acts; the other, called the Secondary Consciousness, holding those mental processes and procedures of which we have no knowledge. That is, each human being is one individual with two distinct phases of existence. Now it is this secondary consciousness, subjective mind, or subliminal self, that is amenable in hypnosis to what is called Suggestion, or the insinuation of a belief, impulse, or image into the mind of the subject by emphatic declaration. While the patient is in the hypnotic state his subliminal self dominates his objective intellect and his objective will, and the suggestions impressed upon it directly and positively are fulfilled at the time and after waking.

Both Christian Science healer and hypnotist seek to alleviate pain by arousing in the subject the idea that it does not exist, and each obtains control of the secondary consciousness to effect his purpose. In ordinary hypnotism there are two distinct conditions: lethargy, or the inactive stage, and somnambulism, or the alert stage. The first is a condition of deep sleep; the second, one of ex-

alted mind power and increased physical activity in which the subject lives an unreal life that he remembers nothing of after awaking. But his subliminal self unhesitatingly accepts, in either of these stages, every emphatic statement or direction of the hypnotizer, no matter how it may conflict with stereotyped convictions and every-day experience. And, what is still stranger, suggestions for post-hypnotic fulfillment are carried out to the letter sometimes for months after the treatment. In this way are banished from a sufferer's life (I speak from my own experience as a physician) melancholia, morbid fears, delusions, *folie du doute*; natural sleep returns to the couch of the insomniac; the physical functions of digestion, absorption, and circulation are stimulated; functional disorders are permanently cured and serious organic diseases substantially relieved.

Reputable physicians in Europe, as well as in America, are reporting cases by the thousand in which hypnotism has acted as a palliative or cure. These cases include not only functional nervous disorders like hysteria, chorea, occupation neuroses, and insomnia, but also diseases in which pain is a prominent symptom, as sciatica, angina, and rheumatic

affections; and even such incurable maladies as tuberculosis, locomotor ataxia, and cancer. The nervous systems are controlled, the appetite is improved, and sleep is secured by the establishment of functional harmony through the power of suggestion.

The special means, however, to which the Christian Scientist has recourse in his "healing" procedures is Auto-suggestion. It is to be remembered that the subjective mind of a given individual is as amenable to suggestion by *his own* objective mind as by the objective mind of an outside personality. Such suggestion by an objective consciousness to its own subjective consciousness is called auto-suggestion. The part that self-induced hypnotism of this nature plays in the drama of human life is little suspected by the mass of men. It governs physiological changes; it controls the number of births on the higher levels of society; it renders immune from disease, or prepares the soil for the reception of bacteria; it explains much self-deception, and at the same time much of that concentration of mind on elevating ideals which, when called into being by the eloquence of a Wesley or a Moody, has snatched thousands, without resolution or even consciousness on

their part of its presence, from the clutches of sin.

It is the "I won't die" that makes a man live twenty years of usefulness when his physicians have given him but a month of misery. It was the "I will live" that lifted John Wickliffe from the pallet of death in the presence of taunting friars, and indued him with physical and mental energy to translate the word of God into the majestic Anglo-Hebraic of the fourteenth century.

The subliminal self is the medium of expression for hereditary propensities, and the voice through which genius speaks. Hence it may be argued with no small show of reason, that the subliminal self of Stratford's butcher-boy created the deathless plays of Shakespeare.

I am not to be understood as meaning to substitute auto-suggestion for the grace of God. Yet in the providence of God, auto-suggestion is made possible by his fusion in the single mind of a double consciousness, and who will deny that his saving grace, as well as the malignant power of Satan, *may* operate through this means? Who will contend that, having disclosed to us this mighty instrumentality, God does not intend us to

make a proper use of it? *The error of Christian Science consists in regarding auto-suggestion, not as the means whereby the grace is conveyed, but as the saving grace itself.*

A striking characteristic of hypnotism is its power to elevate the moral status of the subject and give him a more nearly perfect control over his mental as well as his physical organization. This is what Christian Science patients refer to when they say they feel better, experience a change, can endure business reverses more resignedly, can overcome obstacles more easily. Mrs. Eddy is right in maintaining that the tendency of mental healing is to uplift mankind. A third field has opened to the scientific hypnotist, and one which is sure to prove of the greatest interest and utility—the educational field; and scientific men are studying the influence which may be exerted by hypnotism in the development of minds and the betterment of morals. To-day, alcoholic drunkards accept the suggestion that drink is their most dangerous enemy, and reform; abusers of drugs desist at the command of a highminded operator; kleptomaniacs, moral perverts, criminals of all kinds, where they can be brought into rapport with a hypnotist of

strong Christian convictions, are obliques from the career that leads to ruin. We need not go to Christian Science for wonders in the line of metaphysical healing. Persons in search of treatment by suggestibility are advised to shun the mountebanks of this cult and have recourse to a reputable neurologist.

The methods in vogue among Christian Scientists of treating the dangerously or hopelessly sick, by appeal to the subliminal self, are unchristian and inhuman; so much so that repressive legislation is widely demanded for the protection of society from a legion of charlatans whom existing laws do not reach, and who are thus left at liberty to denounce the wholesome measures of sanitary science, to assume responsibility for the most dangerous forms of disease, and to trifle ad libitum with human life.

Finally, Christian Science viewed through the lens of theology is practically pantheism; a pantheism refracted from the ancient Vedanta philosophy, with its illusion theory of the outer world, through the dazzling prism of modern theosophy. The fundamental doctrines of the new religion are stated by Mrs. Eddy in four propositions

which she says "will be found to agree in statement and proof even if read backward."

"I. God is All. All is God.

"II. God is Good. God is Mind.

"III. God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.

"IV. Life, God, omnipotent Good, deny death, evil, sin, disease. Disease, sin, evil, death, deny Good, omnipotent God, Life."

The rankest pantheism—God is all and all is God! Spiritistic pantheists adhere to the first proposition; materialistic pantheists to the second.

God, Man, and Nature, are one. "Man," says Mrs. Eddy, "is co-eternal and co-existent with God." The universe is identical with God. There is no finite soul. There is no matter. And this recalls the dream of Professor Tyndall, who suddenly (he tells us) saw, as if lit by a stream of light, the whole universe traversed by lines of force, and these lines in their ceaseless tremors producing light and radiant heat. And dashing forward on the trail of his ideas, and thrilled into creation by the emotion he felt, he declared these lines were the lines of gravitating force and that the gravitating force itself constituted matter. Force and matter were

identical—matter or substance, and force or tendency to acceleration. This is the intoxication of science.

Pantheism must deny the moral personality of God as well as that of man, who is only an illusion. It is the concentrated essence of ancient heathenism, and moderns who embrace it, whether they style themselves Christian Scientists or Esoteric Buddhists, are pagans without the pale.

Christianity teaches the immanence of God; his omnipresence in Nature and in man; an organic relationship between Creator and things created; but it explicitly asserts that, while the universe exists by and through God, it is not what God is. There is a Force which is not Me.

Mrs. Eddy declares also for preexistence, and thus announces her belief in reincarnation—probably obtained from dabblers in modern Hinduism, as she is presumably ignorant of the Upanishads. "If man did not exist before his material organization began," she maintains, "he could not exist after the body is disintegrated"—a palpable non-sequitur. "If we live after death we must have lived before birth." Why? Because I, I, I itself, I, Mary Baker Glover Eddy, the Ameri-

can Blavatsky, say so ! Eddy's *autos epha* seems to be all that is required to give currency to the veriest balderdash. One Carol Norton, the oracle of the cult in New York, declares that "Christian Science is synonymous with common sense." This is quite likely to be true, as ninety per cent of what is denominated common sense is unqualified nonsense.

And how does Christian Science regard the Saviour of the world ? Spiritists call him a medium : Neo-Buddhists, a Mahatma ; Muhammadans, a prophet ; Mrs. Eddy harps upon the theory that Jesus was a mere demonstrator of Christian Science ! The agony of the Son of God on the evening preceding his passion she flippantly explains as due to a consciousness of the prevailing error that matter is real ; and the death of Christ on the cross for the sins of the world is, from her standpoint, only "an example and proof of divine science." In boasting of her metaphysical treatment as a reappearance of the divine power exercised by Jesus Christ, this woman is guilty of as shocking blasphemy as the Jews of old who cried, "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub !"

"Jesus of Nazareth," she patronizingly

says, "was the most scientific man that ever trod the globe;" he was only a man, however. Christ was the spiritual part of him, Jesus the material; a dual personality! Christianity, on the contrary, affirms that "two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, the Son, which is the Word of the Father, never to be divided—whereof is one Christ, Very God and Very Man, who truly suffered to reconcile his Father to us and to be a sacrifice for the sins of men."

Christian Science is pronouncedly anti-christian in that it covers a nineteenth century woman with the mantle of Jesus Christ by making her the recipient of a revelation whereby she is invested with the secret of his miracles and clothed with the power to perform them. Its worship is a cunning counterfeit of that of the Church Catholic, its claims are blasphemous in the extreme, and its teachings are subversive of the sacred doctrines to which all Christians owe allegiance; for it denies the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, interpreting his atonement as an allegory, and withholds from sinners pardon through a crucified Redeemer. "Jesus never

ransomed man by paying the debt that sin incurs," declares Mrs. Eddy, and "asking God to pardon sin is vain." The Christian Scientist has no need of a Saviour, no need of prayer.

Among the most startling of Mrs. Eddy's sayings are the statements: "Christ Jesus was too good to die" (inference, he did not die, neither will Mary Baker Glover Eddy), and "Truth appears in the womanhood as well as the manhood of God, our divine Father and Mother"—the latter a revival of the ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, and Hindu conception of a female principle in Deity. "Mrs. Eddy," cries an enthusiastic C. S. B., "has interpreted to a needy world the nature of the Divine Maternity." After defaming Christ in her printed works, discrediting his divinity, casting him out as a spiritual ditch-dog, denying his very death, this woman in her Easter message to a congregation of Scientists at Atlanta welcomes "a risen Saviour," a "Christ with grave-clothes laid aside," in language calculated with machiavelian adroitness to blind persons inclined to place a charitable construction on her teachings. Thus she backs the strained rope of her mongrel pantheism, while a host of shatterbrains purr their approval.

Such is the faith that has bewitched so many who were once Christians and enticed them out of the fold ; so aptly stigmatized by Dr. Gordon as " a sort of witches' caldron, in which every conceivable heathen and Christian heresy is found seething and simmering to produce the subtle essence called mental medicine." In no other way can its strange influence be accounted for than that it is one of those delusions assigned by St. Paul to the latter days, a device of the devil to focus men's hopes on something else than the justice and mercy of God. The ulterior object of this mixture of falsehood, contradiction, sophistry, fog, and moonshine, is to offer men and women who have become restless under what seem to them the restraints and constraints of the Christian religion a specious substitute for the simple faith of their fathers. And human sheep are found to flock in multitudes to its empty feeding-troughs at the call of its *mala fide* shepherds. Even persons of superior parts are the gudgeons of its metaphysical glitter, giving fresh points to Shakespeare's observation :

" What damnèd error but some sober brow will bless it and approve it with a text."

Christian Science is a purse-clipping en-

terprise *a capite ad calcem*. It has been clever enough to see its opportunity in the present epidemic of philosophical intoxication which proclaims that a greater religion than Christianity, delivered of the relentless demand for something newer and better by the midwife of inordinate conceit, has come upon the scene—in the words of one who has dropped the Christian plow handles, “to glorify humanity in its goodness;” to substitute “a higher, nobler, more beautiful conception for the personality of God;” and “to make us all into Messiahs superior to those ideas of Jesus that were neither original, nor accurate, nor practicable.”*

In the name of the Son of God, the Founder of your faith, I caution you against the imposture and the cunning overtures of its adherents. It is unchristian, antichristian, godless, Christless. Between this belief and the religion of Jesus there can be no possible compromise. Accommodation is out of the question. One can not be both Christian and Christian Scientist.

* B. Fay Mills, in the “Metaphysical Magazine” for April, 1899.

What is Christianity More than Socialism, Communism, and Economic Democracy?

(If they say, . . . Cast in thy lot among us ; let us all have one purse: my son, walk not thou in the way with them. Prov. i. 11-15.)

OF all the unclean birds that prey upon the ignorant, discontented, covetous elements of society, the human vultures known as Communists, Socialists, Christian Socialists, and Collectivists, are at once the most detestable and the most to be feared. For it is not the proletariat alone whose passions are inflamed by the new "Gospel of Industrial Emancipation," with its characteristic remedy of legalized theft for the innocent possession of wealth, which it declares a crime. Much of the instruction given to young men and women of the cultured classes is tinged with communistic views, and thus based on that modern self-conceit which has a better philosophy to offer to the world, a more excellent social system, than that of Jesus of Nazareth. Such reckless teachings are greedily adopted by penniless doctors of philosophy whose hands are too white to lay hold of the instruments of honest toil, and

who hope that in some general revolution against society, which their incendiary oratory is calculated to incite, they may float to the surface and live in position and affluence at the expense of the common people, whose deliverers from the tyranny of wealth they insolently proclaim themselves to be.

And then there is another type of your college sensationist who—equally brazen in his stand that the state has a right to correct all inequalities of wealth by the leveling process of taking from those whom it regards as having too much to give to others who imagine they have not enough—insidiously bolsters his position by appeal to Revelation. He interprets Christianity as a mere variety of Socialism; he expounds the Bible as the veritable text-book of communistic doctrines; and he accepts Christ as the greatest Socialist that ever trod the earth. On what principle such wresters of Holy Writ become possessed with a knowledge of just what Jesus “contemplated” with regard to an “economic revolution” now storm-centering in the world as the result of his teachings—how they know that he upheld the broad principle of their creed, “The wealth of the

rich is the robbery of the poor," or looked upon "individual property as evidence of moral fall," they do not feel called upon to explain. Their extraordinary dicta suggest the alternative of perfidious intent or intellectual dystrophy, as there is absolutely no justification for modern Socialism or Communism in the teachings of Christ. The government of Heaven is anything but communistic. Jesus responded with affirmative emphasis to the question of Pilate, "Art thou a King, then?" and he will judge us in that capacity as individuals, not by clans, or septs, or communes. Spiritual rewards, he has declared, will be proportioned to individual services. How long such communistic teachings are to be tolerated in this Christian land, God only knows—how long this learned swagger is to impose on society; how long sound is to go a mumming as sense and a draff-cheap sophistry dipped in the dye-vat of impudent assurance to masquerade as logic; how long argument subversive of existing systems is to take the place of honest Christian endeavor for the amelioration of society.

I have been asked whether Socialists are not sincere in their teachings. I have never

known one that was not puny. Through all their agitation is clearly heard the clink of gold. Show me the Socialist who would refuse the gift of a square covered with buildings in the city of Boston, and I will admit his consistency. The only sincere Socialists are men without property, who have everything to gain and nothing to forfeit by a redistribution of wealth ; persons whose circumstances are so exceptionally unfortunate that they are willing to barter the sweets of liberty for bed and board at the hands of a communistic society.

What now is this Socialism that offers so great attractions to turbulent spirits alike among the commonalty and the privileged classes? Let us understand clearly its meaning and the nature of its revolutionary demands. Then we shall be in a position intelligently to apply to its doctrines the touch stones of Gospel truth.

Whereas definitions of Socialism differ, the economic and non-religious doctrines maintained by its most advanced and enlightened interpreters—notably Karl Marx, Bosanquet, and Dr. Schäffle—are essentially the same. It is a system, having in view the abolition of individual effort and competition on which

modern society is based, and the substitution therefor of cooperative action introducing an alleged more equal distribution of the products of labor. That is, it proposes to supplant the present method of industrial competition under which men have lived from the beginning, each entitled to the products of his own labor and receiving for them a separate compensation regulated in amount by their quality and the outside demand—it proposes to supplant this system by a new method of industrial cooperation whereby it is designed that the majority, the laboring classes, whose will Socialism accepts as law, shall pool their labor in various productive establishments, assigning to every member his individual work, and distributing among all as wages the common produce of all. Socialism further implies the joint ownership by all members of a community of the instruments, appliances, and means of production, including land and capital, railways, the merchant marine, factories, machinery, agricultural and other implements. Private enterprise, all business as now conducted, is to be suspended. All manual laborers are to be paid in products and amusements in proportion to the work done ; and persons whose

services imply intellectual application, like teachers, physicians, experimenters in science, and judges on the bench, are to receive shares in the commodities produced by national labor, the number of shares being governed in each case by the time occupied in work useful to the community.

Socialists propose a distribution of material products among individual producers in proportion to their work. This would at once occasion the very inequality in the wealth distributed that Socialists decry. Accumulation must take place in private hands and hence a redistribution of private possessions would shortly be necessitated. I am aware that Schäffle holds that Socialism does not contemplate a periodic redistribution; but in the nature of things, such would be inevitable. There is no way in which equality can be preserved except by the redistribution or wanton destruction of private property accumulated in excess of community regulations. Socialism claims to put an end to all inequalities; but as it requites labor unequally, inequality must result from unequal payments. The eleventh-hour people do not share in this system with the whole-day heat and burden bearers. Hence to preserve equality of

possessions, a certain surplus must either be destroyed periodically, or periodically redistributed. The only persons who would profit by such an absurd system would be the undeserving poor—the lazy and alcoholic paupers.

Then imagine the scenes on distribution day. Who would be contented with the portion parceled out to him by the public overseers of production. The success of such a system involves absolute honesty, which nowhere exists ; infallible judgment to estimate the division fairly, which is inconceivable ; mental and moral efficiency vastly superior to that possessed by the average man. It supposes human beings unswayed by jealousy, strangers to passion, with low estimates of their own services, always contented with their apportionment, in every way above board. In other words, the success of Socialism is conditioned by the universal prevalence of Gospel Christianity. Given that, and no reason can be advanced for the desirability of Socialism.

Socialism assumes as a fundamental doctrine that labor is the sole constituent of value, and regards wealth as transfigured labor and hence theft on the part of employers from

their employees. All employers are thieves; and all toilers who expend muscular energy in producing anything are entitled to all they produce. It condones stealing as a mere over-violent readjustment of unfairly divided values. It distinctly teaches that wage-earners always receive in money-wage *less* than the full value of the product of their work; ignoring the fact that labor is a mere factor in wealth, that it does not create the materials or machinery it handles, and that it would be helpless if not directed by supreme human intelligence. A thing is worth what it will sell for in market, whether it be a farm, a bushel of potatoes, the manuscript of a story, or a day's work. And a laborer is not robbed because he receives from a capitalist the full market value of his services. The Rev. Dr. Behrends * aptly illustrates the point in question:—

“The motorman and the conductor of a trolley car might say: ‘Our labor makes this car run, and therefore we are entitled to all the fares which are collected, or at least to the largest share of them.’ But they did not lay the rails, they did not hang the wires, they did not build the cars; and they could

* In “The Revolutionary Demands of Socialism.”

not do any of these things if they tried, and therefore must pay the men who can. No man is going to put his labor at another man's disposal without a fair remuneration, and the more skilled that labor is, the more must be paid for it. Men do not build railways and buy cars for fun, any more than motormen work for fun. But suppose roadways, and trolley wires, and cars were to be had for nothing, can the two men on the platforms run the cars? One man collects the fares; the other man turns the current on or off, manages the brake, and rings the gong. It keeps them busy; but what would their work amount to if there were no power-houses, no dynamos, no electric current in the wires? Nobody needs to pay for the lightning; but not everybody knows how to make it available; and the expensive machinery of the power-houses, with the cost of its repair and renewal and efficient management, must be paid for out of the fares collected. Without it the cars would not move an inch, and nobody would pay any fare. The man who turns the current on or off, and who handles the lever, has at his command millions of invested capital, not one dollar of which he provided, and thousands of skilled workers,

without whom his work would be utterly unproductive. In all the higher grades of industry, it is the machinery which gives value to the product, not the man who handles the machine. But was not the machine made by somebody, and ought not the men who made the machine to own it and get all the profit out of it? But who made the machine? Can every man who uses a hammer and turns a lathe make a machine? Must you not have the inventor and the draughtsman and the superintendent of construction? These men, perhaps, work very little with their hands, but they work with their heads; and in a world where heads are so necessary, they have to be generously paid for."

Labor must not only have material to work on and tools to work with; it must further be encouraged and directed by brains. Inventiveness, capacity for management, courage in the adapting of means to ends, as well as manual labor, must be taken into account as sources of wealth. Hence the claim of labor to the whole product is unjustifiable and immoral.

Socialists brand all private property as robbery! Riches are as much theft as stolen

goods acquired by violence or fraud. The most upright farmer or straightforward trader who has worked honestly for his humble home and slender income is a robber on the same plane as the foot-pad. "No saint can own a farm!" cries one with a morbidly sensitive social conscience; but in the next breath he contends that a community of sinners can. Others demand that all the property in the world shall be confiscated and then equally distributed. Nationalism, or Economic Democracy, is but a phase of Socialism. In the words of Edward Bellamy, it also proposes to "deliver society from the rule of the rich, and to establish economic equality by the application of the democratic formula to the production and distribution of wealth. It aims to put an end to the present irresponsible control of the economic interests of the country by capitalists pursuing their private ends, and to replace it by responsible public agencies acting for the general welfare. That is to say, it is proposed to harmonize the industrial and commercial system with the political, by bringing the former under popular government, as the latter has already been brought, to be administered as the political

government is, by the equal voice of all for the equal benefit of all."

Schäffle declares the Alpha and Omega of Socialism to be the transformation of private and competing capitals into a united collective capital. Note how it is purposed to settle with capitalists like the Rothschilds, a family reputed to be worth five hundred million. This wealth socialistic agitators propose to appropriate—in other words, to steal—and for fifty years pay the family an annuity in the form of provisions, clothing, furniture, luxuries, and amusements. In two generations its members would be compelled to support themselves by manual labor; and if they should object to this—why, let them emigrate to a land where Socialistic ideas do not prevail. Think of thus taking her property from Helen Gould, who is preeminent among American women in deeds of judicious charity, and distributing it among the depraved classes to dissipate in drunkenness and lust! It is this kind of agitation that is filling the world with malcontents, with nihilistic robbers and dynamiters. And such agitation is unfortunately rendered possible by high-handed, dubious, and out-and-out immoral procedures in the accumulation and

expenditure of wealth; by the sight of gigantic monopolies, syndicates, and corporations unscrupulously managed to starve out thousands of humble honest bread-winners, and thereby add to the wealth of grasping millionaires.

It is not property that is the root of all evil, as Socialists proclaim—but the abuse of property, coupled with the spirit of covetousness in rich and poor, that inordinate passion for money and possessions which knows no rest by day or night in their eager pursuit—that malicious and brutish thirst in the low-born for the belongings of those who are better-to-do. Money-making has another side, one that is not ignoble like this toiling and hoarding simply to gratify the property emotion, but one that is entirely praiseworthy from the Christian standpoint—accumulating by self-denial and honest toil to provide for those we love—for the pure women who are the sharers of our joys and disappointments; for children who may enjoy educational and social advantages only through our unremitting application. And what can be nobler and sweeter than the devotion of life to the honest acquisition of moderate means for love's sake? Christi-

anity indorses such pursuit of riches ; and God Almighty has placed upon it the imprint of his sanction in the reward of happiness that as a rule accompanies it. It has been convincingly argued that no danger is to be feared from the concentration of property in the hands of the servants of Jesus ; and of this there are numerous exemplifications. Consistent Christian capitalists are never industrial oppressors, never parties to the widely noised conspiracy of wealth against the people. Their gauge of remuneration is its sufficiency for the comfortable support of the wage-earner. This I have seen grandly illustrated in my study of industrial conditions abroad ; and by way of example I will ask your attention for a moment to the Christian management of the world's great thread works at Paisley, Scotland, as a standing rebuke to such as clamor that our religion has invariably failed to establish congenial and mutually profitable relations between employer and employee. The prosperous manufacturers of this town carry out practically in their daily intercourse and business associations the principles of reciprocity as inculcated by Jesus Christ. The men and women whose devo-

tion has rendered them rich in worldly possessions are made sharers in their material prosperity, and their wealth is freely given for the endowment of charitable institutions in their native city. These Scottish employers further realize that the moral welfare of their operatives is intrusted to their keeping, and that it is made their duty to surround it with every possible safeguard. As a consequence, disaffection, discontent, and what is infinitely more deplorable, the enforced adoption of a life of prostitution by women employees as an alternative with starvation, are unknown. The chaste lives of the Paisley mill-girls contrast markedly with the depravity that is the reproach of our American system ; their cheerful homes with the filthy tenements that disgrace our great manufacturing centers.

Generous provision is also made for the physical comfort and mental training of the operatives. Beside the great Coats mill stands a thoroughly equipped school-house, erected by the owners for the accommodation of "half-timers," or children who receive instruction during three days of the week and work in the factory the remainder of the time. In addition to this, a sewing-school is

provided, where lessons are given free of expense in hand and machine sewing. The Messrs. Coats have also built a dining-hall where factory girls are furnished substantial meals for as low as five cents in our money, half-timers being supplied at half rates. Extensive baths are also connected with the establishment for the use of employees; while the clerks have their separate dining-hall and reading-room. After twenty years of service, in case for any reason they become incapacitated, deserving operatives are pensioned at the rate of two dollars a week, which is ample for their support in Scotland; and old and ailing pensioners are sent to the seacoast for a month every summer at the expense of the firm. The attitude of the Coatses toward their servants is generally characteristic of the Scottish merchants. The rich manufacturer moves among his employees as a father, mindful of their interests and jealous of their rights; while they have learned to look up to him with all the love and respect of confiding children. If the spirit that inspires the noble deeds of the public-souled men of Paisley should go abroad among the mammon-serving employers of this land, the abuses that are voiced

on every side would soon be rectified. That spirit is the spirit of pure unselfish Christianity—the spirit which alone can solve, with its divinely quickened insight, the perplexing problems of this age.

Christian teaching in regard to property rights is very clear. Like all other rights, they are essentially moral in character; and any employment of power incompatible with the free exercise of these rights is immoral, and hence of necessity unlawful and unjust. We acquire a right to property by the labor of our hands or brains, by voluntary exchange, by gift, by will, by inheritance. I have a right to the results of my work, to do with them as I wish. The product arising from the innocent use of my powers is mine, not yours! not some society's! And in this principle is to be found the explanation of American prosperity and of American progress. May God rebuke and baffle the un-American agitators who would have it otherwise. If you raise a crop of grain on land not previously appropriated, that grain is yours by all that is right, and just, and holy! If you build a sawmill and intrust its conduct to employees, it does not follow that these employees have a right to the profits

of your mill! Consistent Socialism clearly antagonizes the Christian theory of human rights—the right to life, liberty, and the free choice of means of happiness; the right of self-defense; the right to trade and get gain; the right to marry, and to train and educate children. Man has divine sanction for exercising all these rights, and no system devised by man is justified in their infringement. The lawfulness of doing what one pleases with one's own was declared by Christ. As interpreted by him, right implies moral liberty to pursue and possess under certain prescribed limitations everything that makes for the attainment of happiness and the fulfillment of function and destiny. It has been so from the beginning.

These principles are in accordance with the laws of God. Where they have obtained, civilization has evolved. Reason and experience are united in evidence that private property is not "a social inconvenience"—does not represent a spoliation of mankind. It is held, in all enlightened countries, under just limitations defined by law. Its possession does not imply unlimited license in its use and abuse. So much for the morality of the property-right.

But there is a nobler side to its possession and exercise by Christian men and women, who regard themselves as stewards of the Lord's goods, at liberty to dispose of them only in the interest of the Divine Donor. Such was the interpretation placed upon the possession of property by the early Christian fathers, who do not deny the right while restricting it. Said St. Augustine: "Let him who is unwilling to share his goods with the poor understand that when he hears exhortations to show kindness, God is not commanding him to give what is his own, but rather to give up that which is God's."

Some communists, in harmony with the teachings of Plato's Republic, interpret monogamy as the exclusive possession by one man of a piece of property, and hence justify community of wives as well as community of chattels, attacking marriage and advocating free-love. The so-called "complex" marriage of the Oneida Perfectionists really implies this. Schäffle admits the existence among Socialists in general of loose views regarding marriage and family life. Not only are the several kinds of property common, but the persons of women among the members of a community; and he seeks

to apologize for this state of affairs by attempting to show that even among the well-to-do and educated classes free-love is theoretically, if not practically as widespread as free religion ! If this were true, there is no argument in it. Morality and Christianity have ever declared for monogamy and indissoluble marriage, have ever deprecated plural and adulterous unions. In the social system of Jesus, conjugal faithfulness is indelibly intaglioed. Nowhere in the Gospel narrative, thank God, is there the slightest trace of the communistic principle that the husband has a property right in his wife. Jesus Christ proclaimed the equality of the sexes, the sacredness and indissolubility of marriage—nay, read the God-detested sin in a single licentious glance. And Jesus, the incarnate God, whose heart bled for the penitent harlot, in every breath, in every attitude, in the enunciation of every social principle, forever figures as the uncompromising foe of divorce and prostitution.

Finally listen to the following words of the German incendiary in his "Quintessence of Socialism," regarding the Christian religion : "Socialism of the present day is out and out irreligious and hostile to the Church. It

says that the Church is only a police institution for upholding Capital, and that it deceives the common people with a check payable in heaven! Hence the Church deserves to perish." There is no mistaken tone to this avowal. The Church declares expressly, What a man sows that shall he (the individual, the private person) reap. Its founder urged men to lay up treasures where moth and dust do not corrupt, and pronounced those eternally blessed who hold a certified check in payment for deeds done in the flesh to present, if you will, at the great Banking House beyond the skies. Happy indeed are the holders of these spiritual Christ-indorsed certificates. The Socialism of to-day either contemplates the overthrow of all religion in its denial of the existence of a God, or else it consigns religious questions to the Coventry of private concern.

There must be ever an irreconcilable antagonism between the irreligious and sensual influences of Socialism and the spiritualizing tendencies of Christianity—between a system that is instigating the masses who have no laid-up capital, to throw off all authority both of church and state, and seize the prop-

erty of the rich with the five billions of dollars deposited in the banks and the loan and trust institutions of the country, representing the proceeds of honest labor in a thousand different lines ; that laughs to scorn sexual purity ; that encourages the grossest license, appeals to the baser passions of men, and bids for the patronage of lawbreakers ; that finds its national god in unbridled pleasure at once the destroyer of the body and the deadly dwale of the soul—between such a system, and a religion that enjoins respect for the powers that be, that declares the inviolability of property, the sacredness of marriage, and the law of moderation.

Where Socialism has been tried, it has failed. Guaranteed physical support has not been accepted as a satisfactory compensation for the surrender of individual liberty. It is not true that the best work of the world has been done by communistic institutions as Dr. Herron contends in his book entitled "Between Cæsar and Jesus." The history of human development is the history of so many advances in civilization conceived and executed by individuals—from Junius Brutus who overturned the regal government at Rome, from the heroes of Marathon and

Thermopylæ, from Alexander of Macedon who paved the way for the spread of Christ's Gospel in the Orient, to Constantine and Charles Martel and Peter the Hermit, to Alfred of England and Edward III., to Wickliffe and Luther and Calvin and William of Orange and Henry of Navarre, to Wesley and Whitefield, to Washington and Lincoln. What had socialistic influences to do with the inspiration of the men whom God selected to plan and consummate the mighty reforms of the world? This very point is conceded by Dr. Herron in the crowning contradiction of his chapter on Private Property. "I sometimes think," he says, "that *a single man* of great economic power, with the heart of Christ in him, could change the world," as if Christ himself had not already enacted the part of that single Man and completely changed the nature of this world.

I repeat that Socialism so far as tried, has proved a failure. The Shakers, who are Socialists, and teach, in addition to the community of property, the doctrine of celibacy and the duality of Christ—a male and female principle, an eternal Mother—have dwindled during the last fifty years to two thousand

souls. The Oneida Perfectionists have lapsed into the Oneida Company Limited, each member having a separate interest represented by shares of stock. So experimental Communism is dying everywhere, and is only popular among laboring men whose object is to see how little return they can make for their wages. Its universal realization would mean progress obstructed, inspiration shackled, laziness enthroned, indifferencism dominant, relapse to savagery assured. It would be synchronous with the advent of non-religion; and in the accomplishment of the evolution pictured by its abettors—in which “as slavery was succeeded by feudalism, and feudalism was displaced by capitalism, so capitalism is now to be superseded by socialism,” half the inhabitants of the earth and all perishable property would be destroyed.

It has been argued in some quarters as already intimated, that the Bible indorses Communism; and thoughtless Christians are won through such misrepresentation. As Socialism is non-Christian so is Christianity non-socialistic; and those who talk of Christian Socialism are compounding non-compatibles. The axiom of Christian morality is—

Every man has a right to himself; that of Socialism, No man has a right to himself—to his liberty, or his property, or his character, or his happiness, or his reputation. Society owns him, body and soul—intellect, will, and conscience. He is without personal rights and personal responsibilities. Hegel's rule for all moral and social relations finds no application here: Be a person and respect the personality of others. Personality counts for nothing in Socialism, whose aim is so clearly the enslavement of society, not its manumission. Beneath its cloak of altruism, glitters the murderer's dagger and smokes the incendiary's torch.

I have said that Christianity is non-socialistic. Technical collectivism was no part of early Christian philosophy. While representing the practical application of his religion to consist in social service, Jesus nowhere commanded or even advised his disciples to pool their earnings or turn over their property into a common fund or stock. They were not forbidden to have conflicting interests, nor to engage in business competition in an open-handed manly way. We read that early Christians had all things in common, but this does not mean that they resigned

individual interests in their property. If so, they could not subsequently have disbursed the products of its sale to their poorer brethren as we are told they did. Had their property been fused in a communistic reserve, there would have been nothing to dispose of by private sale, no buyers, and no poor to relieve. Individual generosity and poverty are alike impossible under a perfect social system. It was the practice, however, of primitive Christians to make periodical distributions among such as were in need ; and when you remember that a boycott was enforced against all who joined the early Church, and that they were cut off thereby from support, sympathy, and even employment, you will realize that the occasions for such charity were frequent and pressing. Ananias was not condemned for withholding his possessions, but for robbing God. Peter settled this question for all time in the searching interrogatories, " While it remained was it not thine own ? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power ? " The sin of Ananias and Sapphira lay in prostituting the holy almonership which they had assumed of their own free will to the love of compliment. They forged God's name to secure

credit with men. It were needless to multiply instances of the retention of private property by early converts, of interests in real and personal estate by the original apostles themselves and by their Christian relatives and friends; or to show that alms-giving in the early centuries of our era was a voluntary expression of Christian love, and not required authoritatively by the Church. There was no disposition to force the rich and talented to use their superior endowments in the service of their fellow-men—a course which would have been contrary to all ideas of human rights; which would have taken away man's free agency, and with it all individual motives and all credit for action; which would have cauterized the conscience by transferring all responsibility to the commune, and have reduced the image of God in man to the psyche of the brute. The test of a man's faith in Christ was the love of that man for his brother. In illustration, I quote from Justin Martyr's first and principal Apology (A. D. 138): "And the wealthy among us Christians help the needy (there is no constraint except the love of Christ which prompts). And we always keep together, and on the day called Sunday, those

who live in cities gather in one place, and the Memoirs of the Apostles are read. And they who are well-to-do give what each thinks fit ; and what is collected is deposited with the President who succors the orphans and widows, and those who are in want or bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us"—mark, not grudgingly or of necessity, God loves a cheerful giver. What a beautiful picture of charitable contribution in the early Church ! Primitive Christians regarded their property as held in trust for the Lord's service, and were always ready for any claims which that service made. It was not their own, nor society's : it was God's. From the Christian view-point, the argument of Dr. Herron that the owner of property is simply a steward having in trust what belongs to others, is extremely vulnerable. Christianity insists that he holds in trust what belongs to God, who gave it to him and requires him to administer it for the highest good of his fellow-men—and sometimes he consults this highest good by refusal to share it with them. I hold my possessions as the vicegerent of the Almighty. But at the same time I am a free and responsible agent, and therefore I exercise my own judgment as to how I shall

use and bestow my wealth. God judges me by my motives. Such is and always has been the Christian doctrine of property.

The Christian conception of man is that of a social being who fulfills his terrestrial destiny only by building his life into the lives of others. The duties of this complete Christian life are expressed in the requirements of common charity, the true spirit of which is thus revealed by Christ himself: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me. I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my

brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew xxv. 34.) Such ministration implies the possession of private property and the power to use it at will.

Failure to accept the social service designated in this enumeration is equivalent to betrayal of the God-assigned trust, and synonymous with unfitness for participation in the enjoyment of the future social life of Christ's kingdom.

The Utopia of Jesus is not beyond human attainment because of the spiritual element in his Socialism, which embodies the energy adapted to the transfiguration of the universe. It is to be remembered that the forces which are capable of molding and perfecting human society are moral and spiritual, not of the earth, earthy. Character is the most powerful social efficiency. Dauntless courage, manly resignation, self-control, suffering for others, suffering for truth's sake, inflexible loyalty to Christian principle,—are the real instruments of permanent social betterment. Love, from which all compulsion is eliminated, is the perfect law of Christ and holds all other virtues. The true reform of society can result only from the indwelling of this love in the hearts of men ; and a government

is Christlike, or Christian if you prefer—not because it is monarchical, democratic, or communistic—but because, to quote the words of Professor Shailer Mathews,* it is “honestly seeking to realize the principles of brotherly love on which are based the social teachings of our Saviour.” It is only by the adoption of the divine ideals unfolded by Jesus Christ as the regulators of human intercourse,—the recognition of that charity which fulfills the whole Gospel law as the main-spring of social progress, that we can hope to realize in this world that civic harmony and that social peace which are a true foretaste of Heaven.

* “The Social Teachings of Jesus.”

What is Christianity More than Altruism, or Socio-Commercial Love?

(We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts.
Song of Solomon, viii. 3.)

SAID Rose Cleveland: "Altruistic faith is a faith in human nature's intrinsic worth: a faith that the race is gravitating toward a goal of final good, rather than of final evil: a faith that humanity is persistently electing itself to honor, glory, and immortality, by a majority: a faith which declares life worth the living; a faith which looks into poorhouses, asylums, and penitentiaries, and still believes in humanity reclaimable and infinitely worth saving."

We could wish that Rose Cleveland had added: And this faith is born only of a grander and inconceivably higher, and all-inclusive faith—a faith in the guiding hand, the infallible wisdom, and the eternal love of the God of destiny. What Miss Cleveland describes so eloquently are wild fruits ripened by the sunshine of Christian love on the borders of its great harvest-fields—fruits that have stolen their nurture from the crop

of the Perfect Altruist. What she calls Altruism is conditioned by Christianity. It is the little sister with shriveled affections, biased judgment, and mere terrestrial aim—the mincing miss at the skirts of the divine Almoner, whose breasts are like towers. The nobler sister teaches that something must precede true benevolence, must underlie genuine self-sacrifice, self-forgetfulness, suffering for fellow-beings, devotion to man; and that something is the mother grace of which all others are begotten in the soul—Faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The love that is the child of this faith is the love that many waters cannot quench, the love which is the supreme good, the love which shall endure to witness Faith itself dissolve in realization and Hope shade into fruition, while it goes on forever—the love that constitutes the absolute essence of the personal, self-conscious Jehovah.

“There is no good of life but love;
What else looks good, is some shade flung from love.
Love gilds it.”

Such a shade is Altruism, the opposite of Egoism in the nomenclature of Philosophy. The word is of Italian origin and means literally otherness, other-self, or love of others.

It was coined by the philosopher Auguste Comte to convey the idea quite nearly expressed by unselfishness, devotion to humanity, true disinterestedness. Around this notion cluster many theories of life, notably the socialistic dream that with the coming of equal facilities for maintenance and recreation—the abolition of the interdependence of private individuals by laws enforcing the nationalization of land and capital and the equalization of labor—discontent will vanish, and with it crime. Altruism is thus supposed to secure the greatest happiness to the greatest number. Collectivists, Fourierists, Tolstoiists—all pretenders to specialism in the profession of self-sacrifice—are demanding that property shall be spontaneously given up for the common good, and threatening an uprising of the people for the purpose of seizing and redistributing what they designate as unearned and unjustified wealth. This is the way in which Altruists love their neighbors as themselves. They would better throw off their masks and appear as the Nihilists that they are.

As a religion, such Altruism involves, along with Socialism, a worship of the State, the taskmistress, the recognized owner of

labor and its products; and involving such worship, while proclaiming universal freedom, it really aims at establishing universal servitude.

Evolutional Altruism, as taught by the philosophers of the Herbert Spencer school, declares that "there is a certain law of nature which compels and governs the conduct of human society in such a way that ultimately each individual who composes it will realize that the reason of his existence in this world is not for himself but for society, and that he must conduct himself accordingly." But was not this law of nature, as discovered in both Old and New Testament, coetaneous with man, and was it not realized in the code of the ancient Hebrews and in Christ's religion of self-sacrifice that bids us do unto others—all others—as we would have others do unto us? The recognition by the early Church of the claims of humanity as superior to the claims of the individual or the claims of any society of individuals, has been dwelt upon in a previous address. But these Evolutionists talk as if abstract Altruism were a conception of their own, a climax to be reached by successive gradations of sympathetic activity; whereas

every reader of history and every student of sociology is abundantly aware that it was idealized and perfectly realized in the life of Jesus Christ, and through him has asserted itself in that of every consistent Christian. Infidels are declaring that in nineteen centuries there has been but one Jesus, yet the world remains the same old world. The falsehood of this assertion is pervious to the most indifferent analysis. The world has been transfigured by the Altruism of Christ; and modern civilization indisputably owes its evolution to Christianity, the greatest truth and love disseminating force this earth has ever known. Evolutional Altruism has adopted for its God what is best in man's nature, and worships the Being of Humanity. It knows no over-soul, regards man as wholly sufficient unto himself, and finds its inspiration entirely in human ideals. It sprung from the Positivism of Comte, who sought to eliminate the divine alike from aspiration and inspiration. Thus stripped of the supranatural element, Altruism, a fad of the decade, has gravitated to the low level of the temporal and the sordid. It is without spiritual attribute, and hence no longer expresses the highest quality of love, but

rather the purely business side which expects more than it gives in the way of material return. The Altruism of to-day makes love a profession. It has degenerated into a worldly socio-commercial philosophy, which demands that everybody should make sacrifices for us, but that we need make sacrifices for nobody. It has been said that "the power to appreciate others in terms of self marks man off from the brute." So the will deliberately to treat others in terms of self is the fundamental and inevitable outcome of Christian belief, and marks the genuine Christian off from the mere Altruist or pretender.

The precept of the Bible is "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—not better than thyself as some neighbors expect, but as thyself; that is, we are required as Christians to exercise our faculties and gratify our lawful desires in such a manner as not to interfere with the right of other human beings to enjoy unmolested and unhampered the means of happiness God has conferred on them. And further, we are under obligation, if we live up to the full spirit of the injunction, to resent any invasion of our neighbor's rights even as of our own. This

moral principle alone justified our war with Spain, to end her career of heart-sickening oppression, of torture, ravishment, and murder, in the realm of our nearest neighbor, the Queen of the Antilles.

In Terence's master drama, "The Self-Tormentor," Chremes, one of the characters, makes the following reply to the question of a neighboring country gentleman as to how he found time to pry into other people's affairs: "I am a man, and I have an interest in everything that concerns humanity"—a sentiment worthy of a Christian, on hearing which the Roman audience shook the theater with their applause—"I am a man, and hence have an interest in everything that concerns humanity." The command given in the seventh chapter of St. Matthew, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," equivalents a requirement to estimate the rights of others by the consciousness in our own bosoms of the possession of exactly the same rights. Hence Christianity requires us to be as careful of our neighbor's life and property as of our own, of his reputation as of our own, of his character as of our own. This is to be thoroughly unselfish, genuinely disinterested.

I have yet to meet with a mere Altruist intolerant of criminal carelessness, the most prolific cause of death. Christian love alone is ever alert against murder potential. Christianity alone condemns the adulterators of medicines and food-stuffs, the retailers of diseased meat and depleted bacteria-ridden milk, the dealers who sell rum to bloated drunkards with the death stamp on every feature; the man who deliberately by the use of morphine, absinthe, cocaine, alcohol, or any other brain-stealer, puts himself into a position in which he is likely to injure his neighbors. Christianity alone rebukes the nurse who neglects the patient placed under her care; the patient who disregards the directions of a scientific physician with fatal consequences; the doctor who, ignorant of the malady he is treating, goes on trying this remedy and that until death puts an end to his experiments.

Christianity arraigns the individual or company that carelessly permits access to danger of any kind—to live electric wire, to stored dynamite or other explosive, to deadly drugs, to road or bridge out of repair, to steamboat or railroad train under circumstances of questionable safety. Christianity

denounces as a crime the spreading of contagious or communicable diseases through thoughtlessness or willful defiance of sanitary law, and places him who omits or refuses to observe proper precautions on a par with the common cutthroat. "Murder," says President Hyde of Bowdoin College, "is more common in the United States to-day than when the Indians roamed the wilderness with tomahawk and scalping-knife. Every death that comes prematurely through defective sanitation, over-strain, anxiety, unkindness, sorrow, neglect, betrayal, discouragement—in so far as those conditions were removable—is practically a case of murder. And the landlord, the employer, the father, the husband, the son, the merchant, the neighbor, who might have relieved or removed the unhealthful physical, nervous, mental, or emotional conditions, and failed to do so, is a murderer." Again, I ask, does selfish Altruism take this high ground?

Christianity holds that he who covets his brother's goods is a thief at heart; while socialistic Altruism clamors for confiscation and redistribution of property. Under the Christian law of obligation to care for one's neighbor's property as for one's own, the cat-

egory of dishonest transactions includes the presentation of all wrongful motives to influence presumable buyers ; appeal to vanity, jealousy, or ignorance ; disparagement of property in the hope of securing it at a reduced price ; exaggeration of the value of articles on sale ; concealment of rise in value, which is so much robbery of a seller ; extortion by employers of services for which they do not pay ; neglect of work for which compensation is received ; theft of time ; theft of mental peace ; acceptance of bribes, which is direct theft from justice, a cold-blooded steal from one's constituents. I have yet to see a non-Christian Altruist who is superior to all these methods of infringing on his neighbor's property rights.

Reputation is what others think of us. It is as much property as bonds and real estate. Hence to subtract from it in any way is theft—as great a violation of justice as marketing worthless certificates of stock. Does calculating Altruism go as far as this? Did you ever hear of its forbidding dissection of personal character in the farm-kitchen, in the factory, the workshop, or in the boudoirs of heartless society women. Socialistic Altruists are urging the people to lay violent hands on

the material property of their neighbors. Think you they stop at the property rights in reputation?

And did you ever consider what neighbor it is that usually furnishes a theme for the tongues that are set on fire of Hell? It is woman—"blest partner of our joys and woes, angel of comfort to the failing soul"—woman, who mayhap has passed through fiery suffering to show us what a woman true may be—woman, calm and holy, that "sitteth by the fireside of the heart, feeding its flames." The brightest star that blazes in the constellation of American principles is a deference for woman unparalleled in the history of mankind; and yet there is a legion of American detractors, agitators of Socialism and Altruistic reforms, who are wont to speak of every woman either as impure or as possessing a virtue that is assailable. They see in every honorable wife a specious bosom-cheat. They read impurity on the sunken cheeks behind the widow's veil. They ridicule with profligate sneer "the rose which, withering on the virgin thorn, grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness." And they even find in pure and simple maidenhood a mark for their venomous daggers. Their carnal propensity

would hardly feel itself rebuffed by the sweet dignity of an Evangeline, as, with the sacrament still upon her lips,

“Homeward serenely she walked with God’s benediction upon her;

When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.”

Behold! the reputation thief is on her trail, eager to assault that chastity of honor which Burke said feels a stain like a wound!

And what says Altruism of those whose ears itch for the tales that are intended to blast reputations—the moral soil-pipes that collect and carry off contemptible, false, filthy reports of men and women to foul the clear-running streams of social life? Christianity makes the ready listener a partaker in the guilt of the scandal-carrier. It is your fault if you accept all the evil you hear of your neighbors. The highest Christian culture is to think no ill, to speak no ill, to listen to no ill. Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity. A writer of poetic mind once said: “If, instead of a gem or a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give.” How strong the contrast here—the gift of a lovely thought to the malicious merciless

calumny of socialistic agitators. For how many noble thoughts has the sensational Altruist made you a debtor?

I find your so-called Altruist everywhere depraving character, teaching unscriptural views regarding marriage and chastity, flaunting the free-love banner, scattering the fire-brands of discontent, nursing malignant passions, proclaiming the right to steal, denying the immanence of God. But Christianity, armed with the prohibition, *Thou shalt not deprave*, absolutely forbids the weakening or undermining of moral restraints by all wicked example and teaching, by all toleration of immoral word or action, by appeal to evil dispositions and perverted imaginations, by ministration to the base appetites of men. When we Christians contemplate the force of example and silent influence—when we consider how easy it is, by tone, or word, or song, or look, or gesture, or shrug of shoulder, or exhibition of picture—to take from the purity of a character—and when we realize that God holds us responsible for the slightest shadow we may cast upon the whiteness of innocence, we must indeed measure our words and gauge our actions with fear and trembling. Do the apostles of socio-

commercial love go to this length? Ah! no, for popular Altruism does not imply moral quality. Popular Altruism, in justification of the sinful lives of its supporters, explains all virtue as due to the insufficiency of temptation.

Christianity loves the better self, the image divine, even in the criminal and the outcast. However obscure, however distorted, it is the lofty purpose of Christian Altruism to give definition to this image; and we well know that as the image of the intellectual and the ethical Divine assumes its clear and beautiful proportions, all sensual thought-forms are forced out of focus. Altruism is not particularly concerned with effort to remove hereditary or acquired sin. With the one, it is the refuse heap for the castaway; with the other, it is the lapidary wheel for cutting and polishing the blemished gem. How dwelleth the love of God in the heart of the woman Altruist who thrusts from her an erring sister or the girl against whom even a slanderous whisper has been heard, yet welcomes to her drawing-room the notorious libertine who openly makes merchandise of her sex? Think you that the Almighty makes any distinction between the man and the woman guilty of

infraction of his seventh command? I am sure there is no such good society in Heaven ; good society, which condones debauchery in the man, but drives into a life of shame, and a death of agony, and a future of what? his confiding victim ; good society, which curtsies to the gold of divorced adulterers and adulteresses who look upon marriage as a stupendous joke. Do you realize that there are in the Borough of Manhattan fifty thousand registered prostitutes, known to the police, and fifty thousand more private mistresses who ply their vocation clandestinely, the greater part of them the victims of seduction? And do you know that ninety per cent of these women unwillingly lead the life they do? That there is no alternative for them with this career of sin? Good society, Christian society, has pushed them out to be the scorn of a hissing world. No name in Hell's dark catalogue too black to brand them with. My God! what frightful responsibility rests upon the men who have sullied and blighted young souls once

"Bright and pure
As a fresh opening lilac when it spreads
Its clear leaves to the sweetest dawn of May."

My God! what responsibility attaches to

your good society, your Altruistic society, in that it has done nothing to dry the tears that wash out sin but cannot wash out shame—in that it unblushingly countenances procedures that force into harlotry the unfortunate daughters of toil.

Ah! how glaringly deficient in the principle of doing it as unto God is the Christianity of the day! Your good society, your Christian society, stands by untouched in the presence of human misery and degradation—phlegmatically beholds the confiding plundered by ruthless speculators, and the poor in tatters and nakedness, and men rendered bestial by drink, and girls forced to dishonor by starvation wages, and jeweled patrons of the bargain-counters literally trafficking in the blood and virtue of woman. Ah! how true it is that what goes by the name of Christianity is not Christianity. Christianity is not so cowardly as ever to ask, Is it safe? Christianity is not so politic as to inquire, Is it expedient? Christianity is not so servile as to question, Is it popular? Christianity is not so economical as to query, Will it pay? Christianity only asks, Is it right? Right to give to my suffering brother of the abundance God has given to me? Right to unbend to

the disreputable? Right to speak kindly to a fallen woman in hope to make her clean? Right to exhibit to her the serene beauty of a holy life? Right to admit her to converse with those women whose spirits walk abreast of angels? Right, as Frances Willard cried, "to place all women in circumstances of such independence that they shall not be tempted to make merchandise of those attributes of their being which are the most sacred to God and humanity?" "There must be heart as well as head in religion. Does supercilious Altruism take these things seriously to heart?"

The times are asking with startling emphasis, Is there nothing your Saviour wants you to do that you are leaving undone to day? Is there no perverted imagination mocked by the phantoms of anticipated indulgence that you can win from debasing pleasures and lift to commerce with the skies? Is there no homeless girl who has learned too late that men betray, and on whose ear is harshly falling the relentless doom of society, "Unclean and outcast!" to whom *you* can be brave enough to say, "Sister in Christ, *I* do not condemn thee?"

Is there no fallen woman pressing her bleeding heart and beating her weary head

against the pitiless barriers an unchristian community has built up around her, to whom *you* can extend a sympathetic hand and help her over the *chevaux-de-frise* that bar her from communion with the good? Do you happen to live in a neighborhood

“Where every woe a tear can claim,
Except an erring sister’s shame?”

If so, you have work to do for your Saviour. Up, and be doing it! The disposition to give the cup of cooling water here is more acceptable to Him than whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. For inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least and one of the worst of these his betrayed or misguided sisters, ye have done it unto Him.

Once more, Altruism enjoins service without regard to motives, fitness, or consequences. Christianity, on the other hand, uses common sense in its benevolence, and is inspired by a regard for the highest good of its beneficiaries. Whereas Jesus Christ gave no encouragement to idlers, pickthanks, and beggars, the Altruistic reformer seeks to emphasize the permanent claim of poverty on the bounty of the State or mutual benefit organization, and thus puts machinery in operation to manufacture a stock of dependents and parasites.

Christianity condemns all unwise and indiscriminate charity. The instinctive social propensity, on the contrary, prompts men to secure happiness for themselves by first rendering others happy. The deed of so-called charity may therefore proceed from no high moral motive or sense of duty, but simply be the expression of disinterested feeling. We have to recognize the difference between such emotional charity and that pure Christian love of one's fellow-beings that is based on a prayerful study of the philosophy of Jesus Christ—that sends men forth into the house of poverty and the bagnio of shame in obedience to the divine command; that ties the tongue of anger and even of reproach; that puts instead kind words into the mouth, words of good will, words calculated to make men better; that charity whose voice resounds through the Gospel in the mandate, "Live truly for yourself by living consistently and discriminatingly for others."

Such love is a stranger to the sympathy with one's self which is so characteristic of Altruism. It does not condone the extravagances of charity. It fearlessly disparages merit in self-sacrifice pursued for itself alone, and proclaims the test of spiritual value to

be, not the action, but the motive that prompts the action. It is in full accord with the Talmudic writer, that "the noblest charity is to prevent a man from accepting charity, and the best alms is to enable a man to dispense with alms." "Give, it is like God," said Tupper. But Christian Altruism amends this into "Give like God, and do no harm by your gift." It recognizes the fact that unwise giving is not the cure for pauperism. It deprecates all suicidal sacrifice, the sacrifice of what is essential to an individual's own highest development for the supposed advantage of some other individual. The only sacrifice that Christian Altruism countenances is a sacrifice not annihilatory of the true self, but extirpative of what is false and self-seeking in the self. Its devotion of life and service to the welfare of others is thus tempered with judgment. The self-sacrificing woman who, in the face of recent scientific conclusions to the effect that inebriates are sufferers from a transmissible disease rather than the slaves of a curable vice, deliberately marries a drunkard to reform him, thereby helps to perpetuate the evils she would correct and is false to her own better self. Generations to come have rights that Christians

are under obligations to respect. We are indeed at liberty to risk life itself for the good of our fellow man, but a high-minded man or woman must hesitate to jeopard the health and happiness of a prospective family for the purpose of satisfying the longings even of the worthiest and purest affection.

The mistaken efforts of Altruism are further manifested in the abuse of medical charity, which encourages thousands of persons who are abundantly able to pay for professional services, to throng our dispensaries and clinics. Thirty-nine per cent of the people of New York receive—or to call a spade a spade, in numerous cases steal—free treatment and free medicine from the public charities, the facilities in this line being amply sufficient for a population ten times as large as that of this city. The exaggerated devotion of certain pious women to all kinds of charitable enterprises, whereby husband and family are neglected and nothing is left for the loved ones at home but headaches and impatient words, is but a phase of the same perversion. I have seen households broken up and cruel separations take place because good wives forgot their supreme duty. This is not as God designed it.

I have seen nervous systems wrecked and mental dyssymmetry result from making a God of the imaginary demands of religion, and pushing self-sacrifice to the verge of idolatry! How true those words of Phillips Brooks, "We must not be so full of the hope of Heaven that we cannot do our work on earth." And so the sentimentalists who fill the murderer's cell with costly bouquets, with gifts of cigars, wines, and delicatessen, and pledge an ostentatious funeral after execution, but put a premium on the commission of crime. That inspired daughter of God, Mrs. Ballington Booth, has solved in a Christian spirit, and by a life of devotion not conspicuous for its neglect of home duties—the great problem of the reformation of the prisoner for the protection of society. Christian love must have activities; but these activities, like all other activities, have their limitations.

Finally, modern Altruism discriminates in favor of the members of an order or society. It urges the personal advantage of membership in its fraternities, and seeks its own to the exclusion of outsiders. Christianity, on the other hand, enjoins universality in self-sacrificing activities. "As we have opportunity," counsels Paul, "let us do good

unto all men," not merely to the members of a mutual benefit society, not because they are Odd Fellows, or Masons, or brethren of some philanthropic order, but because they are human beings. Under the Christian system, "All work for each, each works for all." "Everybody for me, I for nobody," is the conspicuous dogma of Altruism, or Business Love.

A good friend who belongs to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, in presenting the claims of his brotherhood to my respectful consideration, instanced a case in which an Odd Fellow was seriously hurt in the streets of a New England city, and thrown from his carriage upon the sidewalk in front of a pretentious hotel. As the bystanders were carrying the injured man into the corridor, the proprietor dashed out, and with the words, "I will not have my hotel turned into a slaughter-house," ordered the bearers back into the street. But upon the manifestation of a secret sign by the swooning man, his demeanor instantly changed. He detected in the stranger a fellow of his order. "Carry him in," he cried, "nothing in my house is too good for that man." This inn-keeper was an exemplary Levite, but a bad

Samaritan! A consistent Christian would have said at the outset, "Nothing in my house is too good for that man," not because he is an Odd Fellow, but because he is my brother in Christ, and as a Christian I rejoice at every opportunity of this kind to serve my Saviour. Christ is my Noble Grand!" Focus your eyes on the central sun, rather than on the planet that borrows its light.

Contrast with the incident just narrated the following from Ian Maclaren's "Potters' Wheel:" "A congregation made up of well-to-do and easy-going people whom the preacher has sought to move to the pity and service of their fellow-creatures is coming out of church. Just as they emerge, a runaway horse knocks down and tramples upon a young child. She is only a child of the city—nameless and not lovely—who has been in the park and was trudging home with a few buttercups in her hand. It does not matter. In such circumstances, Christian people do not criticise nor calculate. A little maid has been hurt, and her calamity conquers the heart. Men are instantly shaken out of their composure and rush to her aid. Women forget their finery and wipe away the blood. A whole company are of a

sudden delivered from their selfishness and inspired with human interest. Every sin—pride, vanity, hardness, envy—is suspended ; every virtue—love, sacrifice, gentleness, humility—is called into exercise. A crowd of ordinary people has been suddenly raised to practical sainthood by a stroke.” There are distinct inspirations behind this Christian and that Odd Fellow exhibition of Altruism—a scented and a scentless rose.

Most persons join altruistic societies for material gain, for the personal advantage they are led to believe will accrue to themselves ; for selfish sweets of love, not for the good they may be instrumental in doing to others. Hence such societies tend to cultivate self-interest, to the destruction of that godlike spirit in man which scorns admission of weakness and dependence. I have been flatly told that I was in request for membership in a fraternity quite popular in New Hampshire on account of the money and service the brethren hoped to get out of me. The words were, “We want to use you.” I decided promptly that the highest use the brethren could make of me for their own good would be to continue independent of me.

Another thing I have noticed is that men who accept membership in secret organizations with social aims are apt to become indifferent to their religious duties, often cease to attend divine service, interpret brotherly love in its most contracted application to a few favored think-the-sames, and practice charity in accordance with their own pinched whims. Such altruism is synonymous with narrow-hearted favoritism; it is the foster-mother of hypocrisy.

I do not mean to condemn all secret benevolent and social organizations, even with their tendency to the abuse of the mutual assistance theory, as well as to degeneration into mere convivial clubs; but I do mean unhesitatingly to assert that they are all slack-salted when contrasted with Christianity—because of the immeasurably lower level of the source from which their altruism draws its energy.

Christianity unmistakably teaches that it is not sacraments, nor ceremonies, nor secrets, nor priestly ministrations, nor moral character, nor the whole synthesis of Christian graces, that saves a man! but the one thing only God asks is living faith in Jesus Christ—the fountain of a higher devotion, a more

exalted brotherly love, a divine Altruism. This is the root that disintegrates the soil of indifference and selfishness and sends life to the richest fruits of character. This was the one thing the young man lacked who had exhibited in so marked a degree the other qualities of a perfect intellect.

I interpret the existence of altruistic societies as equivalent to an admission that Christ is not enough ; for if Christ be all-sufficient, and all-satisfying, surely every one of them is superfluous. Their object as publicly declared, viz., "to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, educate the orphan, improve and elevate the character of man," has been the avowed object of Christianity for nineteen centuries, and has filled the world with benevolent institutions, and has given birth to multitudes of charitable organizations whose members in the name of Christ extend a helping hand to every son and daughter of sorrow. It is far nobler to do this of one's own free will as unto Jesus, than to do it because of obligation to a secret society or philanthropic brotherhood—to do it, as we all have known many to do, grudgingly and of necessity.

Thank God for the heroic men and self-

sacrificing women who gladly give up ease, wealth, social and professional distinction, to minister to their suffering, sorrowing, sin-burdened fellows—the wayward brothers of the street, the sisters of the mill and factory, the down-trodden mothers of the slums, the fatherless and widow dazed and distraught beside the new-filled grave. The incoming of Christ into their hearts has been accompanied with the outgoing of personal energies in the warfare against moral and physical disease. Such altruism is inclusive; it holds all others. All lesser lights, all counterfeits, imitations, and substitutes, pale in the luster of its divinity.

Man is a social animal, and was not created to live alone. His normal state is one of quest for other personalities in sympathy with his interests, enthusiasms, and purposes; for other beings with souls of his soul, with whom he may mingle smiles and tears. It was a thought of the poet's that angels gather from such friendship half their joy. Can we find it in perfection on the earth?

You well remember these words of Christ: "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. xii.

50.) Here is the Altruist we cannot dispense with ; the Perfect Friend, constant in all things ; forgiving when slighted and even insulted ; pointing the lost way in life's darkest hour ; who companies the solitude of grief and shares the thrills of triumph ; whose whispered commendation is the greatest conceivable stimulus to human action, the one unchanging and inseparable Friend, of all things the most rare, the Image of eternity. Ah ! young man, when you have withstood banter and ridicule at the hands of your companions because you have insisted that neither your person nor your property shall be used as a means of grieving your God or defiling your neighbor—when you have made it plain that you are not afraid to play the consistent Christian—Brave boy ! Listen to the praise of your Saviour, whose will you have respected, My Brother. Is it not far sweeter than the approval of any altruistic committee or confederation ? Is it not more stimulating to lofty purpose and noble endeavor ? Does it not strengthen you in your resolve that there shall be no exceptions to your rule, no favorites for whom you will relax ? And when your so-called friends fall away in consequence of your inflexible ad-

herence to your convictions of duty, does it not empower you to be thankful, to be proud, that you are accounted worthy to suffer such a loss for the sake of your Christian principle?

And you, young maiden, who mayhap have denied yourself a consecrated home and shut your heart to a good man's love in order that you may act the mother to an orphaned household or smooth the declining years of an invalid parent, do you not know who is watching the pearl of your hopes dissolve in the acid of a cruel, yet sweetly unselfish devotion, and in recognition of your service forever fills your loyal pathway with fragrance from heavenly censers? Even He who has proclaimed you his Sister, because without complaining, without questioning its justice, you have bent your fair head to his will.

And you, mother, who have laid your sweet lambs in the earth, and you, wife, over whose chosen one the grass is growing—where turn you for the "faith that lifts, the courage that sustains?" Is it not even to that Jesus who approves your womanly resignation to his decree, and whose hand seems to rest upon your arm, and whose "Peace, be still" brings a great calm to the troubled waters of your

anguish? Is it not that Christ whose words are so articulate in your ears, My Mother? Is there any such Noble Grand in your mutual benefit societies? Do you know of any Worshipful Master who is able to discern the hidden life or value at its true worth the sacrifice and awful struggle? Do you dream of any consolation comparable to that the Redeemer offers you?

Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνή ἔρχεται σκοτίας ἔτι οὐσης—

Mary came when it was dark.

The presence of that forgiven woman illumined the dismal scene on which pivots the destiny of man, an empty sepulcher! So, when all the heart-strings would pull the heart asunder, the love of Jesus passing the love of woman, will scatter the gloom of despair, and the light of his grace, polarized in its passage through the media of faith and resignation will fill the darkened soul with iris-hued comfort. And the sympathy and support of the Divine Altruist are to be had for the asking; the invitation supreme has never been revoked: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

What is Christianity More than Agnosticism? Modern Doubt and Christian Conviction.

(And he looked and said, There is nothing. 1 Kings xviii. 43.)

DURING the ten preceding Sundays, it has been my privilege to talk with you upon the false faiths and strange gods that may be reckoned as dangerous foes to Christianity. To-day, we are to consider non-religion or Agnosticism, the fashionable unbelief which maintains that the existence of anything beyond natural phenomena is unknown and unknowable, accepting no conclusions that are not demonstrable by the procedures of ordinary logic; which in consequence denies immortality and with it the existence of One Supreme Omniscient Being, the primal Cause of all life and the presiding Mind of the Universe, and substitutes for intelligent design as an explanation of the things that are, adaptation to purpose by natural selection, that is, "by the gradual preservation of better and better adaptations and the killing off of worse and imperfect adaptations," the survival of the fittest, under the law of nature. To instance from a Sunday lecture by the late Professor Clifford, an English infidel: "A

helper of men outside humanity, the Truth will not allow us to see. The dim and shadowy outlines of the Superhuman Deity fade slowly away from before us ; and, as the mist of his presence floats aside, we perceive with greater and greater clearness the shape of a yet grander and nobler figure, of him who made all gods and shall unmake them. From the dim dawn of history and from the inmost depths of every soul, the face of our Father Man looks out upon us with the fire of eternal youth in his eyes, and says, 'Before Jehovah was, I am !' " Such is the message of recent infidel philosophy.

Up-to-date Agnosticism, through the pen of Mr. Grant Allen in his "Evolution of the Idea of God," proclaims Deity to be an evolved and abstract conception of the human mind. The Jews carried about a tribal god, Jahweh or Jehovah, a stone object in a chest ; and this ancestral sacred stone at a later date became sublimated and etherealized into the God of Christianity. Existing men are declared to be the descendants of people who have had religions for more than a million years, Christianity being a pure evolution. As we have no records older than 6,000 or 7,000 years, it is difficult

to understand on what principle this author knows so much about religion a million years ago. If ancient literature and epigraphy prove anything, they unquestionably prove a primitive monotheism, and establish the fact that the heathen religions as we know them to-day are the distorted images of a pure faith which was originally revealed to man.

Mr. Allen informs us with an air of insolent nonchalance that Christianity confessedly sets out in its development with the worship of a particular deified man, who, revered at first by a few fishermen, grew gradually into a divine personage. This but uncovers the author's falsehood or exposes his supreme ignorance of early Christianity; for the disciples and their immediate converts worshiped Jesus as their Lord and their God. Mr. Allen continues: "The Mother of God, the blessed Madonna, came to have a practical importance in Christian worship scarcely inferior to that enjoyed by the persons of the Trinity;" and he foists upon Christianity a host of minor dead men and women, bishops, priests, virgins, confessors, and the like, to prove that our religion at once surrendered its monotheism.

It were easy to penetrate the veneer of this sophism. Christians are neither saint-worshippers nor Mariolaters ! Five hundred and fifty miles of catacombs beneath the city of Rome, entombing six million Christian dead, give the lie to this infidel. These subterranean galleries contain the earliest Christian inscriptions and mural decorations full of sweet trust, of unchilled hope, amid the terrors of persecution, and everywhere innocent of all leaning to the idolatrous. Within her very bosom, incised in tile and marble forever, Rome is mothering damning evidence against these harlotries. The sepulchers of apostles and martyrs cry out in an eternal protest. In these memorials of pure Christianity, there is not the slightest insinuation of a belief in the efficacy of prayer to saints, or of worship of the Virgin as co-Mediatrix. In these solemn chambers, Christ is the cynosure, the Alpha and Omega, the all in all—"him first, him last, him midst, him without end." This was primitive Christianity.

In the erethism of his craze to belittle religious faith, Grant Allen endeavors to show that adoration of the dead is the central force in modern Christianity, and pronounces

corpse-worship the protoplasm of all religion. But love for the dead, which Christianity approves, is a very different thing from worship of the dead, which Christianity reprobates. Mr. Allen has constructed in his mind an effigy of Christianity, which he proceeds to demolish with the usual weapons of the infidel. His book, a mixture of falsehood, Tartufism, and self-conceit, is dangerous only to the feeble-minded, or to those who have accepted instruction from theological systems rather than from the pure and simple Word of God.

Agnosticism derides the idea of a helper outside humanity, makes sport of the historic Christ, and blazons Jesus as "an alias of the sun-God or an embodiment of the vine-Spirit." Annie Besant, in a popular lecture, voices as follows the position of modern infidelity: "The difficulty is not to prove that Christ was believed to be an historical personage after the fourth century, but to bridge over the years A. D. 1-300. You cannot carry the history of Christ and the history of the gospels over that terrible chasm of three centuries. I shall show how various myths floating about became crystallized around the figure of Jesus of Nazareth.

I cannot admit the miraculous. That Jesus of the gospels is miraculous is a stumbling-block at the very outset. There are so many incarnate gods in history, and they all present the same birthmarks. They are always born at such a remote period, or at some such an out-of-the-way place, that it is impossible to submit their claims to scientific investigation. Their births are always surrounded by prodigies; they always work miracles when they grow up; there is always something mysterious in their deaths: they always ascend triumphant at last. I allege that Jesus is one of these mythic characters! The essence of the spirit in which science meets the record of miracles is the spirit of Hume—that it is much more likely that men should be deceived than that our whole experience of nature should have been contradicted.”

In the several extracts I have brought to your attention, is succinctly expressed the attitude of the modern agnostic, viz.: No God, no design, no Christ, no miracles; Nature a sort of linked succession of conditioning causes and conditioned effects running itself through all eternity, under well-understood physical laws that govern matter

and motion ; No First Personal Cause, no Lawgiver, no cause and effect Connector ; Man the inventor of the gods ! As Aristotle said, " Too much of Nothing."

Closing eye and ear to the hundred and one monstrosities that are masquerading as expositions of Christian belief, let us,—in the first instance, grasp the essential characteristics of the religion which agnosticism scoffs at. Christianity certainly is not so narrow as to brook confinement behind the bars of denomination or school ; positively not so bigoted as to enforce a claim to sovereignty through some particular interpretation of some musty document ; plainly not so childish as to fancy that a panacea for sin exists in ritual or dogma ; assuredly not so ungenerous as to condemn those whose beliefs deflect a degree from the perpendicular of one of its sects, nor on the other hand so romantic as to recognize in meretricious religions chaste sister faiths. But Christianity is broad and liberal and deep-hearted and withal discriminating. It regards the Church only as an instrumentality for our spiritual growth and education ; and teaches through that Church the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ as preserved in the Memoirs of his Apostles—

not an inferential gospel derived from interested interpretations—never a conglomerate gospel made up of New Testament jewels and heterogeneous débris. Christianity when referred to in this discourse will be understood as the religion of the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the original springs of historical orthodoxy.

We are now in a better position to contrast the conclusions of agnostic logic, in the first place, with the New Testament realization of a God, at once transcendent, majestically enthroned beyond the skies, and immanent, an indweller in the universe, and its phenomena, but not identical therewith. Christianity finds this God everywhere, in everything, and reads in the universe a volume which proclaims intelligent purpose from its every page. It is in agreement with the teachings of science, that there exists between every organism and its surroundings a certain congruity or accord; but it asserts that this congruity is an evidence of divine forethought, intention, provision. Such congruity alone explains in a rational manner our pleasure when we contemplate the structure of the human hand, and see with what nicety its many parts are adjusted to form a mem-

ber unequaled in strength, flexibility, and usefulness. It alone makes intelligible the astonishing adaptation to vision conditions of the emmetropic eye, the only perfect optical instrument, the transformer of radiant energy into light, self-correcting and self-adjusting, conveying sensations of color according to class of nerve fibers impressed and of form according to their number. And it alone makes clear, as wisdom aforethought, the striking harmony between this human eye, to which blue gives sense pleasure and red sense pain, and the predominance of the violet end of the spectrum over the red in the colors of external nature—of the prevalence of greens, and azures, and amethystine grays, and wood-glooms, in hill and valley, in stream and sky, in forest and prairie.

Do you realize that every flower is an expression of some insect's ideal of beauty, shaped and tinted and perfumed by the Divine Craftsman with the design of attracting the moth commissioned to carry the pollen of male uni-sexual growths to the glutinous stigmas of fertile ovules? Paleontology teaches us that plants with gaudy blossoms were bidden to bloom upon this earth simultaneously with the creation of nectar-seeking

insects. The poet is wrong. There never was a flower, in the purpose of God, born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air. And then think of the metabolism in plant life, whereby lifeless magnesia and lime are converted, through the agency of chlorophyl, into starch and sugar. Is this an accident of the fortuitous concourse of atoms?

Even in the little things of creation, the investigating mind detects the hand of the Infinite. Atoms as well as mountain chains reveal the vastness of the Divine Artificer's resources, and kindle in a meditative soul a sense of the Limitless. So infinitesimally subtile and minute are the particles of ether, that Tyndall estimated if all were swept together from the remotest corners of space, they could be crowded into a common match-box. In like manner, the imagination is confounded by the revelations of the microscope; the mind is appalled by the vastness of the invisible world, is embarrassed and overpowered in its efforts to comprehend the Potency that fashions the minutest of structures and becomes filled with a feeling of intense exaltation.

If you should examine the bottoms of the

little ponds to north of us, you would find them covered to a varying depth with the siliceous walls of dead microscopic plants called diatoms, that form the tripoli or electro-silicon of commerce—so minute that thousands of them would be required to bury a pin's head. Their exquisite symmetry, delicate sculpturing, and matchless coloration, give but momentary enjoyment apart from the thought of complete adaptation to their environment by divine wisdom, and complete fulfillment in such adaptation of divine purpose. The conscious apprehension of such perfect congruity not only gives us the pleasurable feeling of true Beauty, which includes the perfection of uses, but brings us into loving touch with the Eternal God of Harmony.

But when we leave behind the glories of this lilliputian planet we have become accustomed to, and stare through the windows of the galaxy into immeasurable fathomless space beyond, where universe of blazing suns succeeds to universe as star succeeds to star in the welkin above us—then it is that we find ourselves confronting a mighty creative instrumentality—an Absolute Author and Finisher, unattainable by the conditioned

processes of logical thought—God, Jehovah, Eternal, One, Personal as is identity to the soul. Then it is that we realize the truth of the Psalmist's declaration, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no Personal God"—then it is that the awful fact bursts upon us: The unbeliever, the skeptic, the agnostic is mad!

What are these stars? To the careless observer, the stellar universe is beautiful; but only he who grasps the moral force behind the blue, who ascends to the creating and the controlling Intellect, experiences the highest satisfaction its beauty can give.

The moral force behind the sapphire—re-gioned stars! "It is not all that I see of the British," said Hyder Ali, "that so impresses me; but what I do not see—the power beyond the ocean—the power in reserve." So it is the mysterious ulterior force, acting with reference to a specific end, that awakens within us Christians the devotional spirit in its perfection. It is not so much the physical fact, as the truth of which that fact is an utterance, and that Truth is God!

What are these Stars? The doctrine of a plurality of worlds—that these heavenly bodies are inhabited as well as the earth—is

perfectly consonant with reason and analogy. It seems incredible that this insignificant atom of the universe—our little world—a dwarf amid myriads of giants that surround it, should be exalted to an importance beyond all the rest by being made the only one peopled with immortal souls! Is it likely that the Almighty created the infinity of starry hosts simply to give light to our diminutive planet, or for the adornment of our nocturnal landscape, or even for the contemplation of his own divine eye? Do we find anywhere in the wide realm of nature the slightest waste of material, or creative power ever exerted without a purpose? Is any portion of energy ever lost or destroyed? Is not every leaf a microcosm? Does not a clod of earth teem with bacteria? and is not a drop of water a universe in itself filled with inhabitants of its own as perfectly fitted by Divine Wisdom to their residence as are we to ours? And can we doubt that the same design extends to the great objects of creation as to the small? Can we reconcile to our ideas of infinite love and wisdom the thought that the stupendous worlds which spangle our firmament are meaningless, useless, lifeless deserts? Such questions will

suggest themselves to the reflecting mind, and may carry with them the conviction that our sister planets, and even the distant twinkling stars, are, have been, or are to be, inhabited. Not necessarily by beings of like physical constitutions with ourselves—indeed that, under their different conditions of light, heat, and electrical energy, would be impossible; but by other sheep, not of this fold, adapted to their circumstances by the same Omniscient Power that has fitted us to ours. There are those who find no more in the magnificence of the heavens than in the bawbles of a jewelry shop; yet the hand of God has there “written legibly” that man may know the personality as well as the glory and omnipotence of the Maker. Is there any rational explanation of all the intricate machinery of the universe independent of God? Can you conceive of cause here without conceiving of it as power consciously exerted?

Intentional adaptation is the lesson of Nature. The manifestation of thought in the universe necessitates a thinker! Christianity discerns order which implies mind, as well in the grouping of iridescent scales on a butterfly's wing as in the disposition of worlds

in the firmament. It beholds its God again in the economy of Nature, and interprets the law of economy as an eternal principle, like that of unity, proportion, order, harmony. In common with the laws of physics and mathematics, they all imply the Divine. But not order, nor developing purpose, nor omnipresent energy, nor physical law is God. They are but utterances of Infinite Design.

When questioned by the officers of the Inquisition as to his belief in a Supreme Being, Galileo, the famous Italian physicist and astronomer, mindful of the mathematical principle that a hollow cylinder with its central air-shaft is vastly stronger than a solid cylinder of equal diameter, picked up a straw from the floor of his dungeon, and facing his persecutors, replied with all the courage of his conviction : " Were there nothing else in Nature to convince me of the existence of a God, this straw alone would be sufficient."

There is either intelligent design in accordance with the universal, necessary, and eternal principles of Science—or else the universe is a chance product, which to me would imply an infinitely greater miracle.

Grant for the nonce that certain chemical elements combined by hap to make a sun ;

it is in the highest degree improbable that the same number of similar elements should do so a second time. We might as well be asked to believe that Hamlets and Paradise Losts may be manufactured by shaking alphabets together in a tea-box. In illustration of the theory of chance repetition, Professor Jevons calls attention to the fact that in whist playing the number of distinct possible deals is so vast, and the variety of games so incalculably great, that no one game could be exactly like another except by intention. Apply this well-known law of chance to the universe, and it utterly fails to explain what we see. It is much easier to admit design; there is more reason here for faith than doubt.

A favorite Agnostic belief which denies God's personal authorship, and has much of luck and hap about it, is the Darwinian theory of self-evolving organisms—a very old theory, by the way, and not original with Charles Darwin, for Sanconiathon, the Phœnician, taught in the fourteenth century B. C. that intelligent beings were evolved from animals not possessing sensation. Grant the truth of this, if you please, and where are we? Suppose we do share an animal nature,

an animal way of moving, digesting, oxygenating blood, with higher brutes, and sub-conscious states with jelly-fishes. Suppose we do possess a psyche in common with lower animals. If God chose—I say *if*, for I do not believe he did choose—to perfect the animal part of me out of a medusa, what matters it? I know that I represent a spiritual order of creatures. I know that I am made in his image. If I could have risen to this from lower forms of animal life, what faith I must have in further possibilities of expansion. There is practically no horizon to my development. But however it may be, I cannot but see God at the heart of primordial chaos as I see him in the center of twentieth-century civilization.

Now, granted the existence of design, of perfect adaptation of means to ends, of parts to wholes, of organisms to environment,—which only they of unsound mind deny,—and immortality must be admitted. Why? Because, whereas the *psyche* or brute spirit whose end is the mere animation of protoplasm finds full scope for its activities and development in this world—the *pneuma* or soul, that whereby man is made a sharer in the attributes of Deity, falls short of the climax of its

growth amid an environment like this. "Deny the existence of God," said W. H. Mallock, in the "Fortnightly Review," "deny man's freedom and immortality, and by no other conceivable hypothesis can you vindicate for man's life any possible meaning." The capacities inherent in man's nature demand eternity for their evolution. Earth surroundings and soul possibilities are out of harmony. When I accept adaptation as the exponent of all natural and spiritual laws, I must believe in a personal God and concede personal immortality.

Deniers of immortality contend that consciousness is but a mere function of animated, healthy brain ; hence that a given individual must cease to be conscious when his brain begins its physical decay at death. This is true so far as the *manifestation* of that particular consciousness through that particular brain is concerned ; for the brain is simply a transmitter of consciousness, as the telephone is a transmitter of speech. Assuredly, the possibility of its transmission by electricity does not affect the existence of speech. The telephone does not produce articulate audible sounds because it transmits them. The piano is not the creator of music

because it is an instrument of musical expression. Music, speech, consciousness, are realities outside and above all media of transmission.

A friend who is very dear to me, a graduate of one of our great universities, recently writes that he can find no satisfactory proofs of immortality. He admits that nothing can be destroyed, but doubts conscious identity beyond the grave. He tells me he cannot reconcile the idea of a future life of recognition and loving communion with an exalted conception of the universe; that such a belief seems to him to be founded on a false estimate of the importance of the individual, as it appeals to the selfish desires of mankind by holding forth a hope of resurrection. In this popular position of the day, what is accorded to matter, force, and energy, is denied to soul, viz., indestructibility. Moreover, wherein lies the selfishness of working out one's salvation in Christ? How is it any more selfish than working out by attention to business one's immunity from the cares, discomforts, and suffering incident to life in this world? Although in so doing I may invite a diagnosis of Gargantuan stupidity, I must frankly admit that I cannot see. I fear

the reconciliation of this difference between us will have to be left to the great Eclaircissement.

I recognize in the phase of opinion my friend has honestly adopted a result of modern university instruction with its deplorable tendency to unsettle belief. And I cannot characterize in terms too condemnatory the indifference of boards of trustees and college presidents to the religious training of the youth for whose character-formation they are largely responsible. At the judgment seat they will be required to answer for their pusillanimous evasion of duty—they who should stand ready to sacrifice every consideration connected with what is called the higher learning to guard the honor and godship of Jesus Christ not only in the Sunday passiveness of high-priced pews, but in their week-day service as fiduciaries of souls—they who quiet their consciences by employing chaplains to talk religion to handfuls of students, while paying large salaries to free-thinkers and agnostics to distribute the pseudo-sweets of skepticism among assailable thousands. It is the duty of the president of a college which has long been regarded by the community as Christian in its

teachings and tendencies to purge his faculties of all instructors, no matter how distinguished from the world's point of view, who would treat the social or theological system of Christ as merely ancillary to some modern hypothesis, or question the truth of the immortality promised by him who said to the crucified thief at his side, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise." If consideration for what society or culture may think of his action weighs with such an officer, he is utterly unworthy of the sacred trust implied in his acceptance of the presidency of a Christian university.

It is sad to contemplate the prevailing trend of American higher education toward religious looseness, apathy, and agnosticism. Christian parents would do well to estimate the risk involved in permitting educating children to run the gauntlet of influences calculated to undermine their faith. Christian parents should regard it as their sacred duty not only to investigate most carefully the curriculum of the college they would select as the training-mother of their sons and daughters, but to test the class-room instruction itself with a view to becoming personally acquainted with the dangers that must be

encountered by young and susceptible matriculates. Verily there is room in this Christian land for a great university distinctly loyal to Gospel philosophy in its every department and in the aggregate of its schools—a university in which the broad principle shall obtain of *Christ first, educational wares and conceits second and subordinate*.

Again, the attitude of your Agnostic toward the miracles of Christ is one of contemptuous, in many cases, of malicious ridicule. But under our divine law of adaptation, were not miracles consonant with the difficulties involved in the transformation of human nature by the introduction of the Christian system? Nothing short of miraculous intervention could have been efficacious in enlisting the affections and fixing the faith of the first believers. Miracles were the stamp of Christ's authority.

Agnosticism either eliminates the supernatural element from the gospel record, accounting for the miracles of Christ on purely natural grounds; or else it regards the whole history of Christ as a myth. "I allege," said Annie Besant, "that Jesus is a mythical character. I cannot admit the miraculous." And Renan went so far as to declare that "the

passion of a hallucinated woman gave the world its resurrected God"—that Christianity is thus based on a lie—the false statement of Mary Magdalene regarding the empty sepulcher and the scattered ceremonies.

Now Christianity is a system of belief founded on the actual death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without these, as Paul taught, our faith is vain. What ground then have we for accepting them as facts? We admit the miracle at which Agnosticism jeers because, first, it does no outrage to our reason; because, secondly, we have irrefutable testimony as to its occurrence. Once apprehend a Supreme God, and the production of any effect dependent for its cause on his creative will becomes to you a possibility. Says the Rev. R. L. Ottley, and well says: "The abstract possibility of miracle seems to be necessarily implied in the religious conception of God as a free spiritual being to whom the moral interests of the universe are of higher importance than the uninterrupted maintenance of physical law." The skeptic denies to the Almighty Lawgiver a right which he concedes to every human legislator, viz., the right to suspend the laws he

has made; the right "to intervene in his own universe in behalf of his own good purpose." There is a Super Nature as well as a Nature. To quote St. Augustine: "The Supernatural is the conception of an order of truths above those of reason, and the conception of a self-existent activity superior to that of mind and matter as these latter display themselves ordinarily in the field of nature." Miracles are indeed contrary to the natural order of events, but not necessarily to the constituted order of the universe. It is a very narrow mind that regards what is called the regular course of Nature as "the final gauge and measure of the divine omnipotence;" that finds in the production of the visible universe the limit of God's infinite creative energy; that fails to see in Nature itself only a tangible phase of a far larger and grander economy.

But for the moment, while recognizing their possibility and their adaptation to the social crises they were designed to meet and control in the interest of the truth, suppose we set aside all miracles as imaginary—have we anything left? Anything in the human life of the Son of God on which our souls can feed, any inspiration, any comfort, any hope,

in the words of that Jesus of whom it was said, "Never man spake like this man?" Words for all time, not for an age—teachings which science cannot refute, which the worst of infidels approve; which Huxley himself, while contending that the Bible is a tissue of lies, advocated the expediency of reading and diffusing among the people? We have left the religion of Christ adapted for everlasting to the wants, the aspirations, the disappointments, the sorrows of mankind. No higher criticism will ever destroy it—no obscuration of records, no inconsistent translations, no perishing of manuscripts, no obliteration of Scriptures. We believe and we know that we have this eternally true religion in the Bible; we have other things there, but this is the jewel that is priceless. Therefore I say let skeptics and critics take what they will from the Sacred Text; let them insist that many a dogma of the church reposes on no better foundation than erroneous renderings of the Vulgate; let them ridicule the bedevilment of the Gadarene swine; let them remain persuaded that the Pentateuch is a recent forgery of Jewish scribes; let them split Isaiah into four individuals. Grant that the prophecies of Daniel were written long

after the events predicted had occurred ; and the Psalms of David date 500 years this side of the poet king ; and that Moses, who was known by name as a great lawgiver to Manetho, to Strabo, and Tacitus, and Juvenal, to Celsus, and Porphyry, and Julian the Apostate, never existed at all. Give infidel and censor, and fault-finder of the If-I-were-God type all they ask—and we Christians need have no misgivings. For the religion of Jesus Christ is independent of, and immeasurably higher than, traditions, and translations, and canons of Scripture. It must endure in all its beauty and power because it is so substantially interwoven with the threads of human destiny as to admit of no disentanglement, so deeply interfused with truth inerrant as to constitute its very soul. It is the brightening, reforming, exalting world-force that ties the human soul forever to its God.

But are we under the necessity of dispensing with miracles ? Have we no unimpeachable testimony regarding the greatest of all miracles, the resurrection of Christ, on which depends the validity of Christianity ? Is it a historic fact ? Was it an empty or an occupied tomb into which Mary of Magdala

peered? Is Jesus Christ the Son of God or an impudent impostor? "Science," says President Schurman, in "Agnosticism and Religion," "is simply the record of the behavior of things under the established order; neither her method nor her apparatus enables her to go beyond this limit; and when Omnipotence comes upon the scene, she is smitten with impotence. Only there are such good reasons for faith in the continuity of natural causation that no one can be expected to believe, without the strongest evidence, in a breach due to the miracle of supernatural agency." Have we such evidence for the resurrection of Christ?

In cases where personal knowledge is insufficient, we naturally turn to the experience of others whence really comes the great mass of what we know. It is what others have seen or heard that constitutes history, establishes guilt or innocence, proves or refutes crucial questions. Concurrence in the oral or written testimony of a number of witnesses determines facts with absolute certainty. The story of the gospels, embodying the consistent testimony of the four Evangelists, is a perfect illustration of this kind of proof. In connection with the substantial agreement

of the four reports, I quote briefly from "An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in Courts of Justice," in which are presented the convincing arguments of Prof. Simon Greenleaf of the Harvard Law School, a great American authority on this very law of evidence: "The character of their narratives is like that of all other true witnesses containing substantial truth under circumstantial variety. There is enough discrepancy to show that there could have been no previous concert among them; and at the same time such substantial agreement as to prove that they all were independent narrators of the same great transaction. The discrepancies between the narratives of the several Evangelists, when carefully examined, will not be found sufficient to invalidate their testimony. If these different accounts of the same transactions were in strict verbal conformity with each other, the argument against their credibility would be strong. All that is asked for the witnesses is, that their testimony may be regarded as we regard the testimony of men in the ordinary affairs of life. If the evidence of the Evangelists is to be rejected because of a few minor discrepancies

among them, we shall be obliged to discard that of many of the contemporaneous histories on which we are accustomed to rely."

There is no discrepancy in the gospels regarding any essential fact or important doctrine or duty. Omission is not contradiction. Matthew overlooked the vision of the shepherds; Luke the visit of the Magi and the slaughter of the Innocents—but for this reason Matthew and Luke are certainly not to be adjudged as contradicting the other Evangelists who mention these events! Moreover, to continue the quotation from Professor Greenleaf: "It is impossible to read their writings and not feel that we are conversing with men eminently holy, acting under an abiding sense of the presence of God and of their accountability to him. Now, though in a single instance a good man may fall when under strong temptation, he is not found persisting for years in deliberate falsehood, asserted with the most solemn appeals to God, without the slightest temptation or motive, and against all the opposing interests which reign in the human breast. If, on the contrary, they are supposed to have been bad men, it is incredible that such persons should have chosen this form of imposture, enjoin-

ing as it does unfeigned repentance, the forsaking of falsehood and every other sin, the practice of self-denial and self-abasement, the crucifixion of the flesh with all its earthly appetites and desires, and hearty contempt of the vanities of the world. It is incredible that bad men should invent falsehoods to promote the religion of the God of Truth. From such absurdity, there is no escape except in the admission that the Evangelists were good men testifying to that which they had carefully observed and considered and well knew to be true."

The accounts given by these trustworthy narrators of the life and character of Christ display a wonderful uniformity, leaving no room for doubt that the same Divine Original sat for the several portraits. And this Jesus, according to the accounts of his disciples (whose testimony regarding their Master we are certainly under as great obligation to accept as that of the disciples of Confucius, Socrates, and Buddha)—this Jesus fore-announced his resurrection, and staked upon its occurrence the truth of his divine mission. The fact that he did so, proves that he was not an impostor. The fact that his twelve disciples held to their belief in his

rising from the dead amid a maelstrom of persecution which whirled them to horrible deaths, proves that they were not unprincipled falsifiers.

But we are to remember that the gospel accounts constitute but a small part of the mass of ancient testimony in favor of the Resurrection. The various Epistles of the New Testament reflect first-century belief concerning this event—the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians (characterized by Renan as “unquestionable and unquestioned”) having been indited within thirty years of our Lord’s death. And these Epistles have borne witness through the ages to the crucifixion of Christ for our sins, and his rising for our justification. From these, as well as from Tacitus, Pliny, and other pagan sources, we learn that the personality of Jesus Christ attracted unwonted notice in the history of the time ; that he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and that thereafter his followers, called Christians, founded churches throughout the Roman Empire, worshiping Christ as their Lord, and for love of him and belief in his resurrection, joyfully accepting the most painful and ignominious deaths with songs of praise upon their lips. In the

first Apology of Justin Martyr (138 A. D.) addressed in behalf of the Christian Church to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, we have direct historical testimony of the resurrection, with references to Memoirs of Christ, composed by the Apostles and called gospels, as being read in the churches every Sunday from Syria to Gaul. And Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, at the beginning of the second century, bears witness to having received information respecting the first and second gospel from John the Presbyter, who had conversed with the immediate witnesses of Christ's resurrection.

But further than this and of immensely greater importance, God has brought to the knowledge of the world, within the last ten years, a Harmony of the Four Canonical Gospels compiled in the second century, and from that time to this locked up in Syriac and Arabic texts. I refer to the Diatessaron, or Fourfold Gospel, of Tatian the Syrian, a disciple of Justin Martyr, who embraced Christianity at Rome and constructed from the four original standards he there studied a composite gospel, read for centuries in the churches of Syria. This Diatessaron was referred to by ancient writers before 250 A. D.,

and it proves incontestably the existence of the four gospels, practically as we now have them, at the threshold of the second century. Hence they could not have been forgeries, or the manufactures of the Council of Nice in 325 A. D., as has been declared by inventive infidels to throw discredit upon them. The three hundred years Annie Besant cannot bridge have been bridged by God.

Once more, two institutions in the Christian Church—the Lord's Supper and the Lord's Day (which displaced the Jewish Passover and Sabbath) have borne witness from the beginning that Jesus really did die and really did rise from the dead. Rationalistic infidels take pleasure in asserting that he did not die, but passed into a swoon or trance from which the aroma of the burial spices awakened him to consciousness—but it is the testimony of all history that Jesus was dead. Mural paintings in catacombs of the second century perpetuate his death and resurrection. All Palestine admitted it. When Peter charged the men of Israel with the murder of Jesus before the Sanhedrim, the accusation was not repelled, as it would have been if untrue; and John the beloved disciple testifies, with scientific exactness that

the physical cause of the death of Christ was rupture of the heart, whereby the pericardial sac was filled with blood—shortly separated into serum and clot which followed the spear thrust of the Roman soldier as blood and water. Roman executioners were sure in their work. And never man died like this man. “Read the history of Christ from the procession of palms to the crucifixion,” said Gladstone, “and what a superhuman majesty is spread over the whole. You may talk of all religions as being essentially one and the same; but what religion presents to its votaries such a sight as this? The behavior of our Lord in the extremity of his debasement transcends all human limits, and exhibits without arguing his divinity.”

No contemporary doubted that the King of the Jews was dead when Joseph of Arimathea, the friend of Pilate, laid his body in the tomb. Within two months after the crucifixion, on the day of Pentecost, the Apostles, who were not deceived, who could not have been deceived, proclaimed his resurrection, and founded a Church which would have been meaningless without it. You and I have as logical a reason for believing that Jesus Christ died and rose from the dead as

that Queen Elizabeth once sat upon the throne of England, or that on May day, 1898, Commodore Dewey destroyed the Spanish squadron in the harbor of Manila.

In conclusion, let me say to my doubting friend: Examine the evidence, pro as well as con, before you pass sentence. Remember that intellects like those of Bacon and Kepler, and Newton, and Daniel Webster, and many modern men of science, looking at the evidence, accepted it because there was reason behind it. Do not, like the gifted author of "Robert Elsmere," that story of the battle of beliefs, inform yourself only in the negative writers, and remain ignorant of the Christian apologists. Do not allow your thirst to be slaked by the scanty draughts of knowledge that have quenched hers. Do not accept the unsatisfying substitute offered for revealed religion by a woman whose mind has been tickled, but whose soul remains untouched, and who gives back practically nothing for the belief she would destroy. Remember, she would not seek to steal your faith if it were not worth stealing. Judge fairly whether historical Christianity rests solely on testimony that is so easily overthrown, or whether it is its own best proof—

whether it is an orchid hanging on emotion only, or strikes its roots deep down into the soil of intellect.

If you will look the seventh time from Carmel, be sure you will detect the fluffy cloud that forecasts the mighty rain. You are under obligations to look that seventh time. Take the road you are sure is the right one. Take some road. Stand no longer in dreamy hesitation or obstinate inactivity at the crossing. Let me say to you that I am confident I have incontrovertible evidence of the existence of an All-Wise God, in the nature about me, in the happenings of my own life; and of the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ at Jerusalem between 30 and 33 A. D. from the testimony of history. The burden of proof rests on the Agnostic. Let him offset this with convincing evidence to the contrary.

I believe also in the inspiration and authenticity of this Bible as the revealed Word of God. From it, you can subtract nothing. To its genuine text, you can add nothing. It is "a simple book for simple men." Only those who know least about it prate glibly of its inconsistencies. Only the Simonists of philosophy falsely so-called levy tascal and black-

mail. Only they who have private purpose or selfish aim to subserve would shroud its clear statements in obscurity, or make it all a mystical allegory requiring the skill of a learned profession to decipher and explain. "Turn it and turn it again," said a wise Talmudic author, "for everything is in it." It has withstood the attacks of the world's infidels from the spleen of Celsus and the blasphemy of Porphyry to the dangerous inaccuracy and willful misrepresentation of Robert Ingersoll. Humanity is growing weary of their driving sleet of falsehood and abuse that passes as argument among illiterate scoffers. If this book were vulnerable, rest assured the weak spots would have been exposed centuries ago; for no book on earth has stood the cautery of such searing criticism as the New Testament. The fact that its haters have descended to pasquinade demonstrates its inviolability.

Now if I believe in an all-wise, all-loving God, at once transcendent and immanent, infinite in power and everywhere at work, a Being to whom I owe my life and my all—a God of love upon whom I can rely so implicitly as to say, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him—surely I can accept his plan of

salvation for the race to which I belong, through an Incarnation "stupendously divine and yet so sweetly human," by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ his only Son with whom he has promised freely to give me all things. And I can build upon the assurance he alone has vouchsafed that this visible is not all; on the hope of a future life of happy activities, on the interpretation of death as joyous arrival at the Father's House rather than reluctant departure from a strange and opportunity-exhausted land.

Ah! dear friends, when we are called upon to shake hands with Time; when we are apprised no longer to go to those deep wells of mystery with the cracked pitchers of our imperfect intellects—O! may it not be our lot to feel with the philosopher of Malmesbury that we are taking a fearful step in the dark, or with the mother of Hume that the pyrrhonism which we have embraced in lieu of the simple, satisfying faith of our childhood is woefully insufficient—the mess of pottage for the birthright. But may we look back with joy and satisfaction upon lives of loyalty to Him of Bethlehem, and forward with hope uncompromised through faith in the Son of God to a blessed certainty beyond the veil.

May God give us light, even the light of the knowledge of Christ, to dispel all clouds of doubt and agnosticism; may God give us faith in all his inexplicable dispensations; may God bring us into that closest communion with the Saviour that must render our position as Christian believers impregnable alike to the assaults of Satan and the sophistry of man.

Evidences of Christianity.

(Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. 1 Peter iii. 15.)

MY concluding address must be introduced with an apology. I stand here to-night to give you a reason of the hope that is in me, not reasons in full for that reason. It were impossible in the brief space of one hour to make any searching examination into the evidences of Christianity, or even intelligibly to enumerate the sources of proof. The presentation of a complete argument would necessitate many courses of lectures and imply a lifetime of thought.

Still, on the principle that, as intellect has in this day so much more to do with Christian belief than mere feeling, every Christian should have some presentable theory of his faith, it would seem wise to exhibit cardinal results and all-satisfying convictions for your serious consideration. And this is all the more important because so few who bear the Christian name, and who believe in the Bible simply because their parents once told them that it is the word of God, are at all

capable of advancing any rational reason for their belief. If what may be said this evening shall have the effect of stimulating personal research on your part, leading you, in accordance with the advice of King Solomon in Ecclesiastes vii. 25, to apply your hearts "to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness," and I may add of spiritual insensibility and agnostic indifference, I shall feel that God has blessed my unworthy but sincere efforts in the cause of truth.

Incontestable evidences of revealed religion other than attested miracles, which have already been considered, are to be found :

I. In the fulfillment of predictive prophecies.

II. In the spiritual victories of Christianity.

III. In the debt of the world to the Christian religion.

IV. In subjective personal conviction.

St. Augustine somewhere wisely remarks, "A Christian ought to study the prophets in order that he may not forget why he believes." Fulfilled prophecy is indeed a

“light that shineth in the dark places” and as such is one of the most convincing evidences of revelation; for admittedly none can know the future except the great Disposer of historic events and the human minds he selects for impression with visions of what is to be. The political economist sees in the records of the human race only the automatic workings of a law of cause and effect; the Christian recognizes the dispensations of that Being who has so connected cause and effect as to compel events, and who clearly foresees all the future. Volumes have been written on the fulfillment of prophecy, of which both infidel and Christian believer are as a rule entirely ignorant. Not only is the career of the Messiah in his character as God and Man, as Prophet, Priest, and King, clearly portrayed by Hebrew seers—Christ thrown into superlative relief, in whom and through whom the scepter has not yet departed from Judah—but a hundred and one several predictions, whose minute fulfillment is most astonishingly authenticated by modern observers and critics, prove that Omniscience itself dictated these forecasts of far-off days. The Christian Bible is the only sacred book that unerringly

predicts, and hence bears unequivocal stamp of inspiration. No thoughtful person can read it without being spelled. It was written to withstand the worst that malice and hatred can project; to impress human natures so long as there are human natures to impress. It is the voice of the only God who has never failed to make good promise or threat.

Leaving you to peruse the unanswerable reasoning of Dr. Alexander Keith in his work on prophecy, a most effective antidote for skepticism, I shall ask your attention only to a single instance of foreknowledge which, so far as I am aware, theologians have not estimated at its true worth. I refer to the marvelous prevision of the tenth chapter of Genesis, which anticipates the great philological discoveries of the last fifty years, and thus puts to the foil colorable argument against the credibility of the Pentateuch. The subject of this chapter is Ethnic Affinities, and its statements are conspicuous among what our infidel friends have been pleased to characterize as the mistakes of Moses.

Confining ourselves to the genealogy of Japheth, we here learn that Gomer the Celt,

and Magog the Slav, and Madai the Indo-Iranian, and Javan the Græco-Roman, and Tiras the Teuton, shall successively hold sway; and we may infer, through ascending levels of civilization, to the climax plane the Anglo-Norman stands upon to-day. The parts played by these peoples of Moses in the great drama of history, according to the Bible accounts, correspond precisely with the parts assigned by profane records to the founders of Celtic France and Britain, whose golden age has been fixed at one thousand years before Christ; to the first settlers of Slavonic Russia, Poland, and Bohemia; to the fathers of Vedic Aryans and monotheistic Zoroastrians, of Pelasgian Greeks and Italians, of Teutonic Germans and Scandinavians. Comparative philology, a science of this century, from a study of existing speech has conclusively proved that the tongues spoken by the ancient Japhetic races, as well as the descended modern languages, agree in their words and grammatical structure. Thus it establishes their kinship and proves the forecast of Moses, who, looking into the tenantless forests of Europe predicted, fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, their occupancy by the races who have made them

the foci of civilization. What is there but the communicated prescience of the Almighty to explain this clear vision of the prophet wherein he beheld the future of those nations of the Caucasian race that for centuries enjoyed the dominion of the ancient world as well as of those that are now foremost in physical and intellectual power? The prophecies of the tenth chapter of Genesis are among the most awe-inspiring in the Bible. They could not have been forged at any time before 1850, because the knowledge they embody has become known since the middle of the present century. Hence, so far as this chapter is concerned, the Pentateuch, if forged by modern Jewish scribes as alleged, must have been forged within the last fifty years, and this is the delirium of infidel audacity. Age after age God discovers to us new proof of the integrity of his Word. Blot out every other prophecy of the Bible, and this forecast of Japhetic distribution and supremacy would convince me of the truth of its inspiration.

In passing, let me suggest that accurate retrospect is as much a miracle as unerring foresight—looking backward for eons into ages of chaos and star-dust and inditing for

future generations a true cosmogony. This did the man Moses. His Genesis, and the revelations of science so far as they go, are in accord. Does he not show us that in the beginning, whenever that was—a hundred million years ago, perhaps—God created; and does not physics declare that matter is not self-made when it assumes matter and motion and explains the universe under their laws as it knows them? It has never ventured to hint at a cause for either. Astronomy and physics substantiate the account given by Moses of a great primitive nebula or indefinitely diffused gas filling the void of space, of the separation of this into smaller nebulous masses, of the concentration of these masses into stars, of a self-luminous earth with a photosphere like that of the sun, and of the formation beneath the photosphere of a crusted plant-producing globe, from which luminous heavenly bodies which had existed through the first, second, and third ages, at last become visible in the fourth day synchronously with the loss of photosphere. God created radiant energy or light in the first day by setting particles of matter in motion; but nebulous stars were invisible from the earth until the luminous

gas that surrounded it cleared away. To-day an observer on Mercury could not see the sun through the fiery atmosphere that enwraps the planet. No inhabitant of earth has ever seen Mercury's crust through these luminous clouds. The apparent placing of the creation of the sun and moon so long after the creation of radiant energy, in the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of Genesis, is the strongest conceivable evidence of the Hebrew cosmologist's inspiration. Science is just finding out what Moses clearly beheld. Geology is confirming the order of the successive appearances of life-forms on the earth as related by him. His account of the creation is forever receiving the support of fresh discoveries. Is it not infinitely more rational to admit that these astonishing surveys of universe construction, these anticipations of modern scientific discoveries, were revealed by God, than to suppose that a mere man, educated though he were in the profoundest learning of the Egyptians, should have transcended all imaginable exercise of human faculties?

You will remember that the Galilean carpenter foretold to a trembling group of unlettered and unmoneyed disciples, in the face

of the blackest of outlooks, the ultimate triumph of his religion as a world faith. Nearly nineteen hundred years have since passed, years signalized by spiritual victories that stamp such an announcement for the future as divine. For never was conflict so unequal: a handful of unlearned paupers arrayed against the Roman Empire, fearlessly forcing a new issue, even salvation through the sacrifice of Christ, and confirming the great truth of the Jewish scriptures that there is but one God. And what a world their Gospel was launched in! Rome was the center of an appalling licentiousness that pervaded art, literature, domestic life, public worship. The city swarmed with divorced wives. Marriage was a mockery. A chance exponent of conjugal virtue who clung to her single husband was hissed as a one-man woman. Knights, philosophers, poets, patricians, titled ladies, and dancing girls, lay drunk together at the feast. Sodom was out-Sodomed in the royal palace. Murder in every phase was rife and thought nothing of—infanticide, matricide, uxoricide. Gladiator slew gladiator for the delectation of harlots. Emperors controlled by unprincipled courtesans steeped themselves in infamy and insane follies. Political

corruption was ubiquitous and brazen-faced; every man had his price. The Empire was hopelessly infiltrated with the poison of nameless iniquity; the imperial city was a hideous malignant neoplasm. And philosophy stood by, impotent to check the awful ravages of the moral carcinoma.

Christianity comes upon the scene to win its treasures from this cesspool of depravity, teaching its lessons of forgiveness and self-control, impressing its touch of love on the ruffian of the arena and even on the heart of the Prætorian soldier, who kneels to its new God. In the flames of the stake torch, under the teeth of the lion, and on the horns of the aurochs, amid the stench and typhus of the Mamertine prison, at the shambles of Diocletian, where the weapons of the executioners were dulled by the multitude of martyrs and commissioned butchers sunk exhausted to the sands—she ever uttered her divine message, Peace on earth, Good will to men. From every persecution she emerged with renewed strength, until at last she saw the fabric of pagan mythology shattered; Cæsar, the Senate, the Roman people, the iron legions—power such as eye of man had never beheld nor mind of man conceived, subdued by her

persuasive art ; and she rose under Constantine to imperial sway. Is it conceivable that a faith without supernatural support and direction could have passed through so fiery a trial and accomplished such a result, the intellectual and moral conquest of the Roman world ? We are justified in asking, " Of what is such a faith incapable ? " The Christian Church is a greater miracle than the Jew. It lives, it thrives, it ever extends its dominion, it bestows its gifts with regal grace and dignity, it educates, it exalts, it comforts in misfortune and sorrow, it assures in the hour of death. Can this Church be rooted in myth, or fiction, or imposture ?

And then find another evidence of Christianity in its victories over individual character, its transfiguration of personalities who know no law beyond their own passions into personalities of opposite traits, dominated by spiritual purpose. Nowhere perhaps is this more impressively illustrated than amid the realism of the Roman amphitheater, when in response to the cry of " Christians to the lions ! " victims flaming with fever, human prey with cyanotic lips and clammy hair were dragged from the dripping dungeons of the Esquiline and thrown to famished wild beasts ;

when Christian virgins were ravished by gladiators and hurled into the dizzy mellay of striped and tawny carnivores, while emperors surrounded by lewd bacchantes and prostituted vestals looked on and jeered. Amid this dream of Hell, Christ reigned supreme in the souls of those he called upon to suffer for his name. An unearthly calm came into their hearts, a holy radiance illuminated their faces, they saw as it were the smile of their Redeemer, and counting as nought the physical anguish, they cried, "O Christ, thy will be done." It was this that filled the onlookers with terror, this sustaining power imparted by a mighty God in the quivers of the death agony. And the same spirit is abroad in the world to-day, and would empower men and women again, should the demand be made upon their faith, to hang upon crosses in amphitheaters and blaze in pitch-steeped tunics for the sake of their Christian belief. Loyalty to Christ does exist. I believe with Ian Maclaren that there has been no age "since the days of the Roman martyrs characterized by such devotion to the Saviour, whether you gather the evidence from the Salvation Army, which with all its seeming extravagances is touched with a noble and simple heroism, or

the missions" whose sweet spirits like Mary Reed entomb themselves in leprosaries to carry to the most repulsive of physical sufferers the message of Christian consolation and peace.

The ideal man of this age is the Christian man—that true embodiment of all that is pure, refined, tender, dignified, consistent, humane, self-forgetful, noble, chivalric. His kindly manners, his cheery conversation, his courteous welcome, his hearty Godspeed, his delight in comforting and helping and bestowing little kindnesses and lifting better up to best, are but the legitimate fruits of Christ love. His sincerity rebukes the barefaced falsehood of a recent writer on Altruism, "Everybody is insincere in civilized countries." Think of it. Christian character must have consistency, the jewel than which there is nothing so rare, and I may add, nothing so unpopular. There is no caste in his Christianity. History reminds us that at the festival of Christ's birth, the gala day of all the year, the proud baron of the Middle Age opened his hall to his vassals and stooped to the meanest serf in friendly converse, while his sons danced with russet nymphs on the village green. All were brothers. But with

a consistent Christian every day is a Christ-mass day, a feast of Christ, on which the motor spring of his God love never fails to bend him down to the poor and lowly, the sick and sorrowing, nay, even to the disreputable and ungodly. One ought to be proud to have it said of him, "This man eateth with publicans and sinners." One should be happy when he hears it observed, "This man will not worship in idol-houses where ecclesiastical pride is enthroned with all its ceremonial of colors, candles, censer scents, and operatic music ; where calculating etiquette supplants natural courtesy, and freezing reserve displaces sunny intercourse ; where supercilious officials receive one's service as if he were their serf and not their equal before God ; where hard-souled but sumptuously dressed patrician constituents studiously give the cold shoulder to Christ's poor." A discriminating divine once said, "The man was never born who could long carry the load of such a church with a Christ-like love of souls in his heart."

Finally, the crowning grace of the character made new by Divine love is spirituality, the diametric contrary of worldliness. How the free soul within us detests the worldling,

the man or woman in whose eyes sacred friendship has only a money equivalent; who, as Voltaire described it, "squeezes the orange and throws the rind away;" who values you only for what can be got out of you, and on the first opportunity returns your disinterested kindness with injuries that are reflexly profitable. This is the spirit of the world; but spirituality sees the eternal value of things, recognizes the touch of Heaven in the commonest objects of earth, moves in an atmosphere of sympathy and love, and is sensitive to obligations that sway among angels. Such spirituality no infidel can argue away. It is the imprint of Christ's own hand, and as such, is the strongest character evidence that one may ask for the truth of revealed religion.

But while admitting the character-transforming powers of our faith in certain instances, some will urge that Christianity is disproved by the fact that atrocious crimes have been committed in its name; that it has authorized orgies of blood; that it has poisoned the consecrated wafer to make way with objectionable persons at the celebration of the Eucharist; that it kindled the fires of Oxford and of our own Salem; that

it has warranted sharp practices, theft, and adultery, on the part of its supporters ; that it winks at the expenditure of seven hundred million dollars annually in this Christian land for soul and body killing alcoholic beverages, compelling the appropriation of another seven hundred million dollars for the relief of the destitution and the punishment of the crimes that result directly from the drink habit ; that its selfish professors, though warned by the voice of medical science, deliberately refuse to limit the prevalence of preventable diseases by attention to a few simple hygienic precautions, and thereby are become the most insidious and heartless of assassins. There is but one answer to this objection. Christianity does none of these things. It cannot be held responsible for the acts of short-sighted or color-blind adherents who have mistaken its spirit and misapplied its precepts. The virtue of a remedy is not to be gainsaid if administered in improper doses or for the wrong disease.

The third general evidence of revealed religion is to be found in the progress of the human race through nineteen Christian centuries. Christianity furnished the educa-

tional energy that lifted mankind above the depressing influences of barbarism, and explains the condition of the world to-day. The loyalty to truth, the conformity to high ideals of duty and service, the aspirations and grand enthusiasms characteristic of modern life, reflect the wondrous personality of the Man of Calvary. Humanity did not civilize itself. Its unaided attempts invariably culminated in such a state of society as obtained at Babylon and Nineveh, at Thebes and Memphis, at Athens and Rome. When left to himself man has always degenerated mentally and morally. Whereas intellectual brilliancy is seldom transmitted, and genius never, vicious tendencies, as a rule, are. Such is the moral of all pre-Christian tales,

“ ’Tis but the same rehearsal of the past—
First freedom, and then glory ; when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption, barbarism at last ;
And History, with all its volumes vast,
Hath but one page.”

And how true it is to-day that in communities where religious obligations are forgotten, where church bell never summons to worship, where children grow to maturity in ignorance of the Bible, where the dead are committed to the earth without God's benison, where the solemnization of matrimony

is left to civil officers, where prayer is regarded as a delusion—how true it is that relapse to moral hebitude is certain. In his proclamation announcing Thursday, April 13, 1899, as Fast Day in New Hampshire, Governor Rollins fearlessly states the issue of the times : “ No matter what our belief may be in religious matters, every good citizen knows that when the restraining influences of religion are withdrawn from a community, its decay, moral, mental, and financial, is swift and sure. To me this is one of the strongest evidences of the fundamental truth of Christianity.”

Think for a moment what would result if Christianity, Christianized by the living Christ, completely dominated our modern civilization. There would be no need of laws, of courts, or of police protection ; of jails, almshouses, and reformatories ; no necessity for standing armies and fleets of war ships. Taxes would be reduced to one-tenth of what they are. Poverty, drunkenness, and prostitution, would be swept away ; industry, prosperity, and a white life for all, would take their place. Most of the diseases that afflict humanity would disappear. Death in youth or in the prime of life would be ex-

ceptional; death from contagious maladies, unknown. Death by violence, which is largely if not entirely preventable, would be so rare as to excite the severest reprehension. So if, instead of inventing flimsy substitutes for the religion of Jesus Christ, men would honestly endeavor to carry out his principles of brotherly love and civic economy, a veritable moral and socio-political Utopia would immediately materialize. And this would mean permanency and progress, not retrogression; for the fruits of untainted Christianity once tasted would never be relinquished for the bitter clusters of Gomorrah.

It were needless to point to the triumphs of Christian civilization in this our day: to the scores of applications of electrical energy; to the advances made in navigation; to the progress toward rapid and comfortable land transit; to the results of exploration and colonization; to the revolutionizing of architectural methods in the construction of factories, buildings for the transaction of business, and homes; to astonishing improvements in the arts of pharmacy, medicine, and surgery; to everyday methods of protection from infectious and contagious diseases by inoculation with their attenuated poisons; to

the application of meteorological knowledge in a signal service system; to the perfecting of agricultural and botanical science; to the utterance of the spirit of philanthropy in great institutions for the relief of suffering, the care of the helpless and the insane, and the treatment of moral obliquity; to the development of æsthetic sensibility in the rude and vulgar, with its accompanying increase in soul-receptivity for ethical impression—and above all to the opinion of learned men who are declaring that nature's secrets are still unknown. "We are only on the threshold of discovery," says Professor Stevenson, "and the coming century will disclose wonders far beyond any yet disclosed. We know nothing yet. We have gathered a few large pebbles from the shore; but the mass of sands is yet to be explored." The impulse to sift these sands in the interest of humanity is but an expression of Christian energy; and whether the investigators are believers or unbelievers, the possibilities of this age along the multitudinous lines of scientific research are conditioned entirely by a civilization that is handmaiden to the religion of Jesus Christ. Again I declare the miracle par excellence of Christianity to be the condition of this world to-day.

In conclusion, the strongest of all arguments for Christianity is the argument from Christian experience, that subjective conviction which springs from a personal acquaintance and communion with the Saviour, that sense of Christ within one through which he knows the realness of his belief with the same unswerving certainty that he knows his own existence. This cannot be shaken out of the believer in whose heart Christ dwells. He will die for it. Is there any agnostic or theosophist or man of science who is prepared to say here, to-night, I am ready to lay down my life for my way of thinking, for my belief—or unbelief—is more to me than human existence and all that human existence stands for? There is no illusion, no imagination, no insanity about Christian certainty. The experiences of every follower of Jesus are too intimately bound up with divine intervention and direction. Who of us in reviewing his life does not recognize the guiding hand of Providence at every turn in answer to his mother's prayers—the support in temptation, the rescue from overwhelming agonies of body and of soul, the reservation for achievements undreamed of and seemingly impossible? We Christians feel a divine support

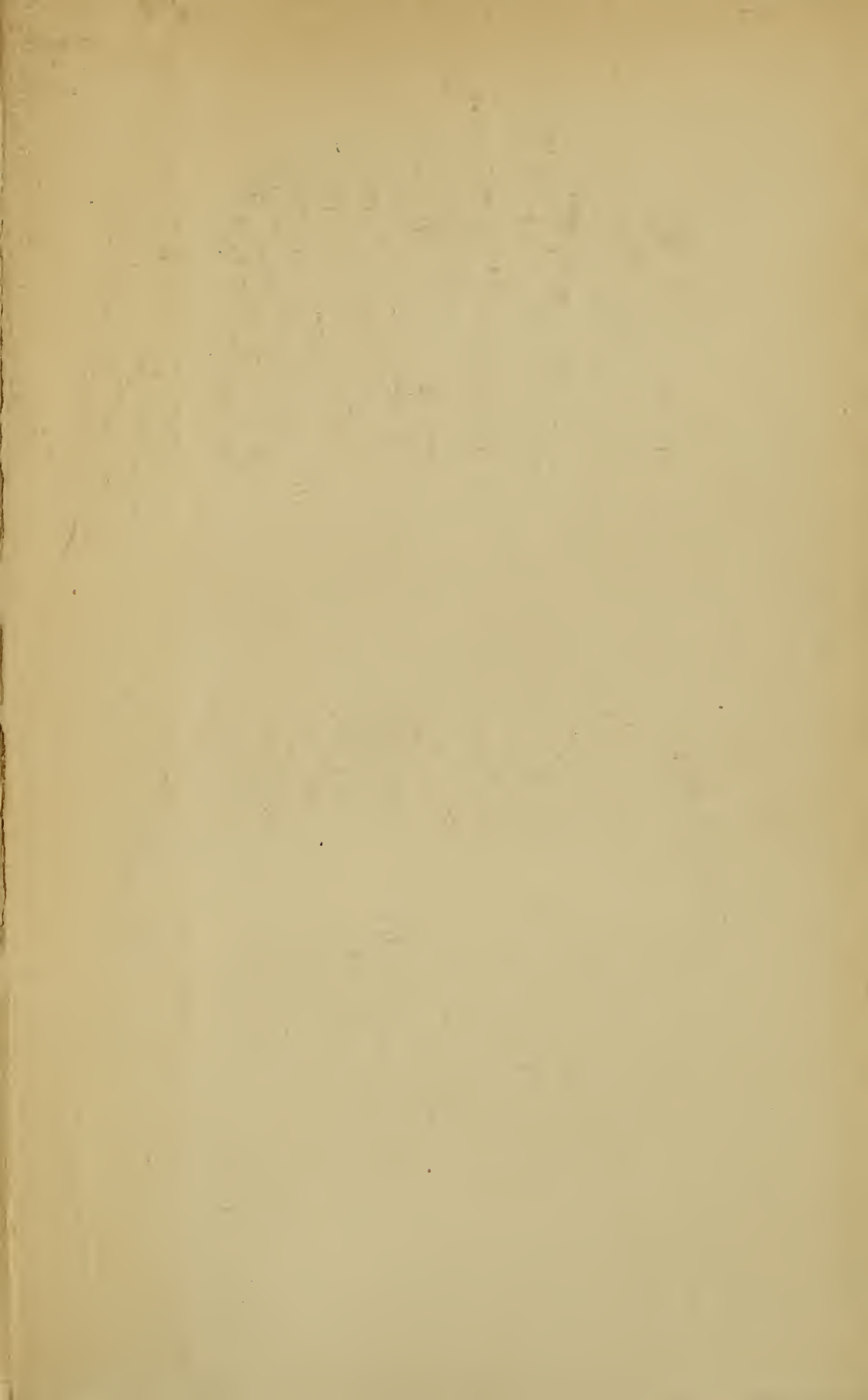
unknown, outside of Christianity, in the history of man.

Have you this sense of God within you? If not, you are hardly equipped to discuss the problem with those who have, for there is no common ground on which you can meet them. I can only advise you who may be agnostic to make a personal experiment. Honestly try Christianity. Permit your souls to be touched by its sweet influences, to be waked by its call to the finer and deeper and nobler issues of life. I have no fear for the result; for I am confident that you will recognize a mysterious change in your motives and wills with a sense of forgiven sins as a genuine experience; I am sure that you will become conscious of a progress begun toward spiritual perfection; that eternity will seem truer to you than time, and that you will incline to look upon death as a swinging open of the gates of happiness.

A skeptical physician who attended a beloved Christian friend in her last illness, and witnessed her holy departure, remarked to an acquaintance of mine, "After all, Christianity does cut some ice." Ah! my friends, to extend the inelegant metaphor, Christianity cuts all the ice that is cut in the chamber of

death. Philosophy has no consolation to offer there; infidelity averts her eyes; agnosticism whispers, "This is the end." But in the beatific vision wherein the dying Christian beholds those heavenly things which it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive, and extends his hands to loved personalities that have gone before, and addresses them by name in affectionate conversation as the moment of dissolution draws near, we who stand by have surest proof of the presence of that sustaining Jesus to whom martyrs, summoned to the arena from the sepulcher prisons of Neronean Rome, cried with a holy joy, "Lead us on, O Christ! to death and glory."

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